Dame Ninette de Valois on English Ballet

Dance and Dancers

JULY 1957

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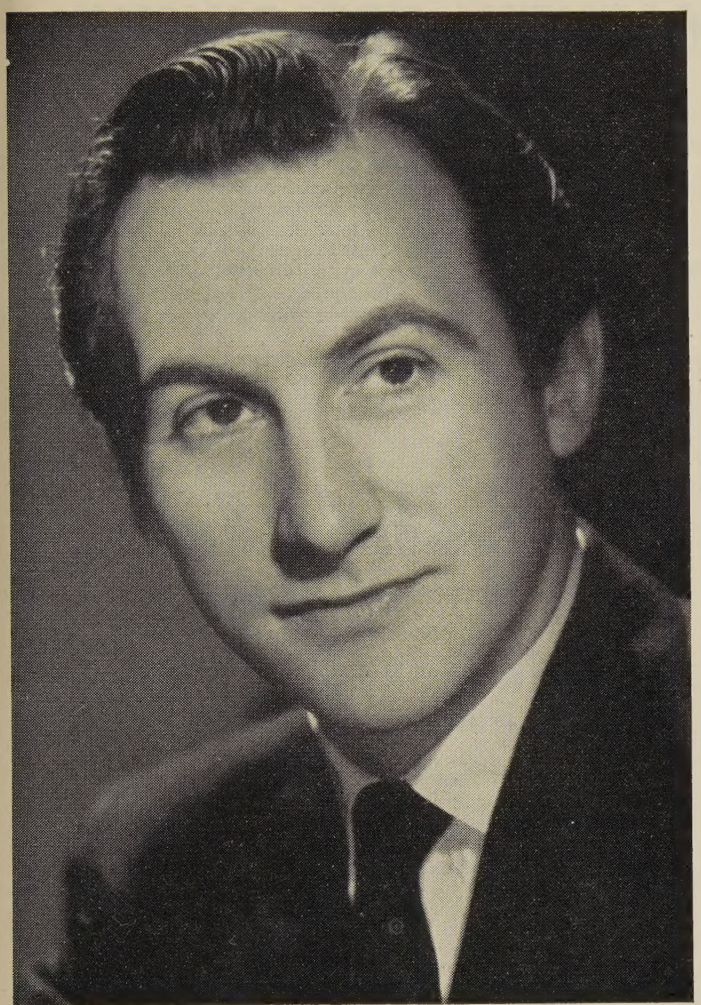

Photo: Houston Rogers

JOHN HART

THE Covent Garden season just ended has seen a considerable improvement in the standard of the *corps de ballet*. In works like *Ballet Imperial* it has swept all before it, dancing with a forceful, athletic precision that was a joy to watch. The man behind this new vigour in the company is presumably the ballet-master, John Hart.

Hart took over the position of ballet-master in 1955. Although at 36 he is still a young man, he has already had a distinguished career with the Royal Ballet as a principal dancer. One of the strongest partners the company ever possessed, he also was, and still is, an exceptionally fine character and mime artist. Joining the company in 1938, he danced his way through the entire repertory. By the time he was called up for the RAF in 1942 he had even by then appeared in the *premier danseur* rôle in each one of the full-length classics.

Since his appointment as ballet-master his experience has been a godsend to the company. Partly because of the war-time interruption to his career, he never himself acquired a particularly brilliant classical technique—and it was this factor that probably hastened his relinquishment of his position as a *premier danseur*. Yet his work was always virile, stylish, intelligent and musical, and these gifts are enabling him to play a key-part in the forming of the new generation of dancers.

A year ago Dame Ninette de Valois wrote that the time had come to end the feminine domination in British ballet and for men to take over the reins of leadership. She has found one of those men in John Hart.

July 1957 8th YEAR OF PUBLICATION Vol. 8 No. 7

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS *Assistant Editor:* CLIVE A. BARNES

WORLD'S LARGEST SALE IN THE FIELD

Farewell to "Sadlers"

AFTER September of this year any ballet company bearing the name of Sadler's Wells will cease to exist. The Sadler's Wells Theatre Trust having decided that it can no longer support a ballet company, the company which used to be known as the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet will merge with the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden. Thus ends a tremendously important chapter in the history of British ballet. In a country where tradition dies hard, the discarding of familiar names and old associations is considered to be a matter of personal loss and this new move will be regarded with dismay by many of ballet's staunchest friends.

Of course it will clear up some of the confusion which now exists about the two companies of the Royal Ballet. It will also stop foreigners from using that mysterious word "Sadlers" when referring to either of the two companies. It will also finally put paid to the stigma which continues to exist about belonging to a "junior" company. These are the advantages which immediately spring to mind. The whole future position is remarkably unclear at the moment, but by about the middle of 1958 it may be possible to get a clearer picture as to whether this is, in fact, a move to ballet's advantage or just another nail in the coffin of British ballet.

As far as I can see, there will still be two sections—one which will fulfil the function that it now does at the Royal Opera House and another that will continue to tour the British provinces. Both companies will be completely interchangeable and will have a far greater balance of stars and personnel than is now the case. It will no longer mean that a dancer promoted to "stardom" vanishes to give merely a few performances a year, as occasionally happens at the moment. Everybody who has reached an eminent position will probably be allowed a chance to shine in the two groups. If so, this will be a very good thing.

Whether the repertoire is going to be so interchangeable is, at the moment, something which has not been decided. The smaller company has a far better modern repertoire than that now shown at the Garden, whereas the latter company has one of the finest classical repertoires in the western world. Possibly some shifting around here would be of the greatest advantage.

The Theatre Ballet has been a haven for experimental works and a trial ground for up-and-coming dancers, and I very much wonder if this vital function will be as possible in the present merger. The fact that there was a mild form of rivalry between the two companies has always been healthy—fierce rivalry is the only thing which keeps ballet alive. There is a serious danger of the Royal Ballet becoming a great big unwieldy bore, if the whole question is not handled with the greatest care. I am sure Dame Ninette de Valois is completely aware of this possibility, and it is up to everyone else to see that it does not happen.

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THE ENGLISH BALLET

by DAME NINETTE DE VALOIS

Extracts from an address by Dame Ninette de Valois, Director of the Royal Ballet, delivered to The Royal Society of Arts at John Adam Street, Adelphi, London, on Wednesday May 29, 1957.

IT is now possible to see that, in the last twenty-five years, the ballet as a branch of our cultural life in the theatre has travelled a very great distance. I can only dare to touch on the fringe of the matter; for the shaping of the whole is still so much in the making. The pattern is by no means complete enough for me to analyse its finer points; there is an element in it of shifting sand. To arrest its progress at any point is out of the question; it must be permitted, in fact encouraged, to press forward. At this moment in the history of English Ballet, the faintest sign of complacency is not permissible.

Let us now realise what has happened: the ballet has at last acquired in England a status of equality in the theatre with that of drama and music.

There is one further recognition of importance at this point. Its healthy economic, as well as artistic, position in the theatre today, finds it able to demand, on terms of equality, the services of both men and women.

The decline of the status of ballet in Europe towards the end of the 19th century resulted (particularly in England with its lack of any ballet tradition) in some outstandingly depressing conventions. The most outrageous of these conventions was the fact that we hardly recognised the existence of the male dancer. This remarkable attitude continued until the advent of the Diaghilev Russian Ballet at Drury Lane in 1909; this was an event in the history of the theatre that swept us off our feet; it eventually dispelled our state of mental stagnation towards the art of the ballet in the English Theatre.

Time has spoken for us: today it is a fact that the Royal Ballet alone has, in the last few years, supplied some of the leading national opera houses in Europe with ballet masters and male choreographers. We are returning to the Golden Age of Ballet again with one of its original truths reaffirmed, namely, the proper emphasis on the male choreographer, dancer and ballet master.

The source of ballet's fundamental roots

All the above remarks tempt me to speak of something that is not generally known, and that is the source of the ballet's fundamental roots. I feel sure that many people are convinced of its inherent artificiality; its divorce from any form of natural dance movement. Nothing though could be further from the truth; it is a fact that all the ballet's fundamental dance steps are derived from the folk dances of Western Europe.

The significance and importance of this is far-reaching: in consequence there can be traced, from the Basque country to the Highlands of Scotland, not only the steps but the very style of the classical dance. I know of no pastime that gives me more delight than to witness the annual display of folk dancing at the Albert Hall; I am able to recognise and name, according to the academic terminology of the classical ballet, every step that I see executed. Here I see these steps unadorned, yet neatly executed in their original simple form. It should be known that Western European dance masters lifted many of the actual dances wholesale into the theatre, the steps were heightened in their execution; in the end they were developed into their present state of perfection.

Such painstaking research work eventually resulted in three great Schools of Ballet in the Western European theatre; schools that are known today as the French, Italian and Danish: they are the result of the pooled resources of the folk dance steps of Europe. Each country eventually evolved its particular individual school or "style," developing, over a period of time, its own markedly national form of creative self-expression in the theatre.

The true relationship of British to Russian ballet

The English school had now sprung into existence, basically through contact with the French, Italian and Danish schools; it again is evolving its own particular style. Thus, of course, it can claim that its foundation springs from the same great source—the School of Classical Ballet in Western Europe.

I feel that you want me to speak of the great Russian School of Ballet. Russian Ballet again sprang originally from the classicism of Western Europe. It has since evolved its own very definite style, both theatrically and academically speaking. The style is very marked and shows its influence as far afield as Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. This Russian school should today be recognised as *The Classical Ballet in Eastern Europe.*

We must now consider the true relationship of the English Ballet to the Russian Ballet, and the possibility of any really marked influence at work. I would say, in speaking of the present-day pedagogy in Russia itself, that the influence hardly exists. If we speak though of certain *international* influences, it is another matter: as an example, the influence of the Russian Ballet in Western Europe as personified in the Diaghilev Russian Ballet. Here is the one great influence; for in this particular case, we speak of England's main guidance on the artistic and creative approach of the English Ballet in the theatre. Russian Ballet in Western Europe has become the guiding star of our theatrical tradition, but the roots of the Russian Ballet School itself are irrevocably harnessed to our own academic fundamental ties with Western European classicism.

So much for our foundations. What has actually been achieved in the last 25 years? I emphasise once again that a strong position has been obtained within our theatre life, and within the last decade there has also been a considerable international recognition bestowed on us. It is the first time in the history of this country's lyric theatre that a national ballet is acclaimed as a serious means of showing the life of our people in yet another national art-form.

Our inheritance put to the test

Our very youthful existence points to a state that has demanded of us in the past a marked degree of caution; the time factor involved has meant that the challenge of "neglect" on our part in certain directions of development is not without foundation. Our present caution springs from our obsession with fundamentals; we have been to date rightly concerned with a certain international attitude in our approach to the academic as well as the theatrical side of our ballets. It is wi e to put all that we have inherited from the past to the test before we attempt to discard anything in part.

I have already stressed the pooling of Western Europe's national dances as the Classical Ballet's foundation; we should remind ourselves that our own native dances have played their part—notably in the style of Scottish dancing, where the traditional grouping of the fingers is to be found as a convention in all the early classical schools. So when we speak of the general "style" of our classical dancing, we are able to prove that it has been attained through this general European heritage. We have therefore naturally more in common with the French, Italian and Danish schools than the Russian school of today. Why is this so? Did not the Russian school also inherit classicism from the great schools of the West? Certainly, as its foundation; but Russian Ballet has been in the theatre for many years. Consider therein certain Eastern influences; consider, for the moment, the difference that there is to be found in the folk dance of Eastern Europe with its strong dynamic rhythms and movement that liberates the whole body; it shows itself to be far removed from the impeccable precision and neatness that we associate with Western movement in folk dance. Therefore, through the influence of Slav folk dance in all Eastern European creative work, it is but a step later to the development of a more plastique classicism, a classicism that is now peculiarly their own and more in keeping with the Eastern strain that is ever present in the Slav races.

Moving forward to a second stage

We belong to the West; to change our "style" would be to kill our particular individuality, and to confuse the issue of our future place in the history of dancing.

I must emphasise, though, that "style" must not be confused with certain more scientific principles and findings that are the natural heritage of the international side of any national school. There will always exist certain major discoveries that are destined to be shared by all; such findings become important contributions to the general progress of ballet in all countries.

Today it can be said that the English school has by now absorbed classicism in the main; it is moving forward to a second stage, for it is already showing signs of creating its own interpretation of established traditional classical ballets of international fame and usage. Its own creative work, of a more international order, bears the stamp of the neo-classicism as expressed in so many works of the Diaghilev Ballet of yesterday and the French school of today. What of our more truly national choreography?

Here England has a greater problem. Perhaps it has been a little understandable that a country with no balletic history has turned, in its first efforts, to its literature rather more than its individual folk dance for inspiration. Again, in our painting the narrative element that is so often to be found here, has resulted in our school of painting acting as a strong national inspiration for our ballets. I feel that we have yet to solve the problem of our folk dance and its place in the theatre; that is to say, the problem of its recognition in our theatre ballets. Certain folk dance and folk lore ballets are necessary in every National

continued on page twenty-nine

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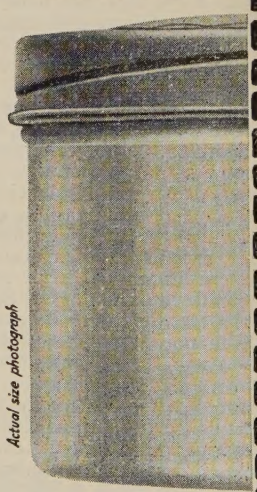

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Pagodas in Milan

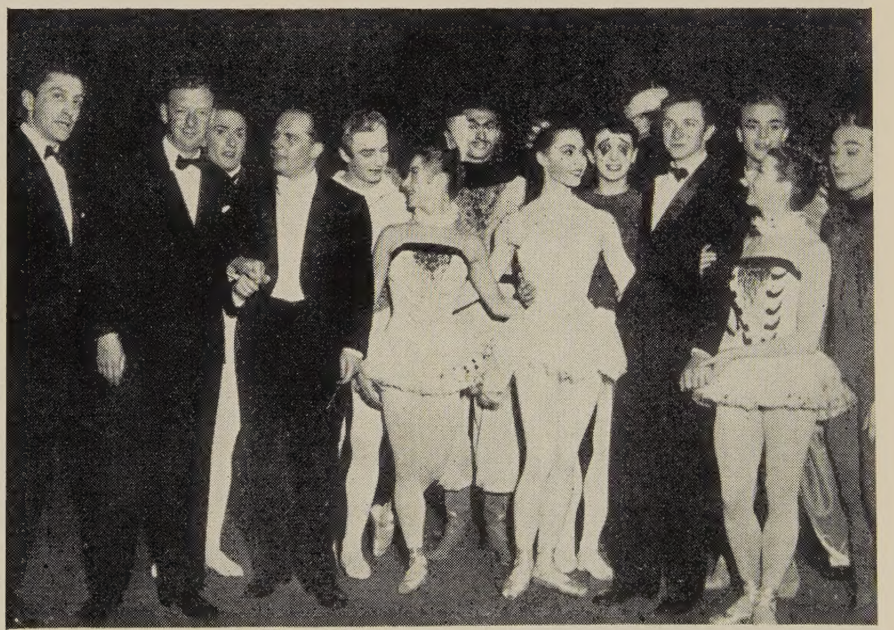
As mentioned in Dame Ninette de Valois's address on a previous page, for the first time in British ballet history a full-length work had its première in a foreign capital within a short time of its London première. This production was commissioned before the first night in England. This ballet—John Cranko's *The Prince of the Pagodas* to Benjamin Britten music and John Piper designs—enjoyed a great success at La Scala, Milan.

Photographed by ERIO PICCAGLIANI

LA BELLE EPINE: Julia Farron in the role of the wicked step-sister in Cranko's The Prince of the Pagodas, *when the ballet was given at La Scala, Milan, early in May.*

THE PRINCE AND BELLE ROSE: David Blair as the transformed salamander prince and Svetlana Beriosova as the princess heroine in a pas de deux.

DIRECTOR'S GREETING: Ghiringhelli, director of La Scala, welcoming Beriosova. In the background is Nicola Benois, who is responsible for most of the designing at the famous opera house in Milan.



AFTER-PERFORMANCE GROUP: Ugo Dell'Ara (Ballet Master at La Scala), Benjamin Britten (composer). Walter Vendetti, Luciano Rosada (conductor), David Blair, Fiorella Cova, Roberto Rascilla, Svetlana Beriosova, Bruno Telloli, John Cranko (choreographer), Flavio Bennati, Vera Colombo and Mario Pistoni.

AT THE BALL: The Young Musician dreams that he is at a ball and that the ballroom, in black with vivid red arches, is inhabited by dancers in fantastic white costumes. Here he finds a few brief moments of happiness when he dances with his Beloved. Youly Algaroff (as the Musician) is seen on the left; Christiane Vaussard (as his Beloved) is aloft forming the apex of the pyramid of dancers in white.

REVIVAL

Symphonie Fantastique

Episodes from an artist's life by Hector Berlioz. Choreography by Leonide Massine (new version). Music by Hector Berlioz. Sets and costumes after the designs of Christian Bérard. Revived at the Paris Opéra on April 17, 1957.

Cast

A Young Musician .. .. YOULY ALGAROFF
The Beloved .. .. CHRISTIANE VAUSSARD
The Shepherd .. .. PETER VAN DIJK
The Gaoler .. .. ALEXANDRE KALIOUJNY
The Girl with the Flowers .. .. CLAUDE BESSY
FRANCINE COLLEMENT, JACQUELINE RAYET, CLAIRE MOTTE and the company

Photographed by SERGE LIDO

THE Paris Opéra has enriched its repertory with one of the most enthralling works of Leonide Massine. First performed at Covent Garden on July 24, 1936, *La Symphonie Fantastique* was afterwards considerably revised by the choreographer in South America. Now we have a third version which draws a balance between the classicism of the one and the dramatic feeling of the other, and is well suited to the large Opéra stage.

By attaching to it a "programme," Hector Berlioz, almost 130 years ago, placed his first symphony under the sign of the drama. For inspiration, Massine has had only to follow closely the composer's detailed synopsis. This is certainly no case then for accusing the dance of laying claim arbitrarily to a score and imposing its own interpretation on it.

The intensely romantic theme moreover lends itself happily to being developed as ballet. Five scenes, or movements, succeed one another imperceptibly. Consumed by despair, the Musician attempts to poison himself. In his hallucinatory state he is prey to strange visions, tragic, melancholy, joyful. In the second scene, he finds himself at a ball where among the swirling crowd of dancers he sees for a few brief moments the figure of his Beloved. He seeks peace in the solitude of the countryside, but a storm and another vision of his ideal trouble him. The fourth scene is the March to the Scaffold. Condemned to death for murdering the girl he loves, the Musician finds her again at last at his interment, but transformed into a witch who flings herself into a vile sabbath round.

In perfect accord with the music, Massine has created a vast fresco, for which the far-flung proscenium of the Opéra makes a worthy frame. The solo rôles are wonderfully integrated into the fluid handling of the *corps de ballet*. Without being "revolutionary," the choreography is extremely inventive and shows a mastery of ensemble composition. If it is possible to have some reservations regarding certain slightly confused passages in the first and third tableaux, the second and fourth —the Ball Scene and the March to the Scaffold—both making highly successful use of pyramid-like groupings, are free from all

THE MUSICIAN AND THE BELOVED: (left): Youly Algaroff and Christiane Vaussard in the two principal rôles of Massine's recent re-creation of Symphonie Fantastique *at the Paris Opéra.*

possible criticism. The ballet leaves in the memory powerful and haunting images.

So far as the production is concerned, only the highest praise must be given to the cast, and especially to the soloists. Youly Algaroff's elegance and romantic presence are exactly right for the part of the Musician. In the rôle of the Beloved, created by Tamara Toumanova, Christiane Vaussard gives a remarkable performance, breathing life into the character at each episodic appearance. Choreography which is more *plastique* than pure dancing gives Claude Bessy and Peter Van Dijk opportunities to show the purity of their line, and their extreme musicality. In the trenchant rôle of the Gaoler, Alexandre Kalioujny has found again the authority and virile attack that distinguished his performances as the Polovtsian Chief in *Prince Igor*.

The *corps de ballet*, who take what is in actual fact the leading part in the work, cannot be praised so wholeheartedly. Technically, they acquit themselves excellently and are well served by the choreography; but particularly in the Ball Scene their lack of discipline was truly deplorable. A very serious effort is needed if the ballet is to have again its former clarity and sharpness of outline.

Another serious criticism is that Robert Blot's conducting of the score tended to change Berlioz's vein of tormented romanticism into something insipidly sweet.

Christian Bérard's beautiful décors and costumes for the original production have lost nothing of their magic. The reds of the Ball Scene, the greys and browns of the prison are particularly evocative.

Marie-Françoise Christout

PASTORAL IDYLL: Claude Bessy (as the Young Girl with the Flowers) and Peter Van Dijk (as the Shepherd) in the third scene.

A Note on the Original Production

WHEN *Symphonie Fantastique* was first given at Covent Garden in 1936, it was the third of Massine's choreographic symphonies The other two were *Les Présages* (Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony) and *Choreartium* (Brahms's Fourth Symphony). At the time a great controversy raged over what was then considered to be doubtful taste in using symphonies for ballet. With the advent of Massine's ballet to Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*, the controversy mainly died down, because Massine had adhered closely to the composer's own programme. This ballet, which took over two years to prepare, helped to pave the way for the use of existing symphonic scores by almost every choreographer of note since that time.

In the original production Massine himself played the Young Musician and Toumanova the Beloved. Marc Platov (now Mark Platt in films) was the Old Shepherd and George Zoritch the Young Shepherd. The Jailer was danced by Yurek Shabelevsky and Nina Verchinina was the Young Girl with the Flowers, now danced by Claude Bessy.

THE MUSICIAN IN THE COUNTRY: After the lively Ballroom Scene and before the March to the Scaffold and the Witches' Sabbath, the Musician finds peace in the beautiful countryside. This third scene is one of the most moving expressions of tranquillity ever realised in any ballet.

Ballet Russe returns to New York

Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo first came to America in 1934 when it was directed by René Blum and, after a number of complicated changes of management and the difficulties caused by war in Europe, it returned to America in 1940, where it has since remained. After lengthy trans-continental tours, great changes in the personnel and intermittent closing down, the company returned to the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, for a spring season, featuring a number of the stars who made it famous.

by ARTHUR TODD

THE recent season of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo at the Metropolitan Opera House ranged, artistically, from the heights to the depths, often all in one evening. Financially, this was one of the most successful New York engagements in the history of any American company, with the box-office gross passing the $150,000 mark for the two-week engagement of 16 performances—all of which proves that the name of Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo is still a great box-office magnet though, it must be added, the names of Alicia Alonso, guest prima ballerina, and guest artists Alexandra Danilova, Frederic Franklin and Leon Danielian certainly must be credited, too, for much of the public interest and excitement over the season.

The many dance highlights of the season, perhaps, served to further highlight some of the company's other weaknesses. Most outstanding of all was the return of the beautiful and beloved Alexandra Danilova in two of her most memorable rôles, in Massine's *Gaîté Parisienne* and *Le Beau Danube*; and in both she made audiences aware of the fact that they were in the presence of a great theatre artist. The first-night audience gave her a deserved ovation after *Gaîté*; and, during the course of her 16 curtain calls, one of her most fervent admirers fell into the orchestra pit while the ballerina was tossing flowers to the audience.

Incidentally, during a subsequent performance of *Gaîté*, which came at the end of a prolonged programme, impresario Sergei Denham ordered that the curtain be rung down on an incompleted performance while Danilova, Frederic Franklin and Leon Danielian were still on stage and later explained that the performance was "running into overtime" and was about to incur "frightening and tremendous expenses." Danilova termed this "Amateurish, unprofessional . . ridiculous programming" in a front-page report of the incident by Walter Terry in the next day's *New York Herald-Tribune*. Despite this, she completed her guest engagements with the company, and, at the time of writing, it also appears that Alicia Alonso and Igor Youskevitch will not resign as they previously intimated. Alicia Alonso and Igor Youskevitch danced magnificently, as always, and were particularly noteworthy in *Giselle* as well as in their *Pas de Deux Classique* (the Black Swan).

STARS RETURN: Alexandra Danilova (left) and Frederic Franklin (right) as the Street Dancer and the Hussar in Massine's Le Beau Danube. *Both artists were the original stars of Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in America and they returned as guests for the recent New York season.*

The rôle of the Street Dancer will always be associated with Danilova, whose great sense of style, wit and authority remain untouched by the years. After the New York season, Danilova embarked on yet another tour of Japan.

Franklin, who was born in Liverpool, was first noticed when he appeared with the Markova-Dolin Ballet. Since 1938, *except for occasional periods when he has appeared with other American companies or in concert performances, he has been the* premier danseur *of Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo.*

Of the four new works premiered, only one, Leon Danielian's first choreographic work, *Sombreros*, met with critical acclaim. This, however, proved to be a complete delight. It was set to Mexican folk music, with stunning costumes by William Cecil. Irina Borowska and Deni Lamon danced the two major rôles supported by an ensemble of 18. Although all this was simply a suite of dances based on Mexican folk themes, it was fresh in its approach, often inventive and always charming, and made me eager to see Danielian's next work.

Cocteau and the unicorn

Heinz Rosen's *La Dame à la Licorne*, to a scenario by Jean Cocteau and set to medieval music arranged by Jacques Chailley, was much too long and contained virtually no pure dancing. The rôle of the White Unicorn was danced beautifully by Nina Novak, but neither she nor Irina Borowska as the Lady or Igor Youskevitch as the Knight could make the listless choreography compelling. And three musicians, set on a bare platform in the centre of the stage, did more than a little to distract attention from the focal emphasis of the work, and they certainly interfered with some of the stage action.

In the late Boris Romanoff's *Harlequinade*, stemming from Petipa's *Les Millions d'Harlequin* and set to the same music by Drigo, "the characters involved are the traditional figures of Commedia dell'Arte—the beautiful Columbine, the lively Harlequin, the suffering Pierrot, the jealous Pantalone, the sinister guards of Venice and other characters of the period." Although it must be granted that Alicia Alonso as Columbine and Igor Youskevitch as Harlequin were outstanding in their variations, the whole work suffered from stylistic inconsistencies that the rest of the company were not able to surmount.

Choreographic Titipu

Even less rewarding was Antonia Cobos's attempt at making a ballet out of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado*. Since the original music was so closely tailored to Gilbert's brilliant lyrics, it is difficult, if not impossible, to translate this phrasing into terms of ballet movement. Only if one were completely familiar with the opera itself would it be possible to know what was going on in this ballet, for there is practically no story line at all, and its chief relationship with the original, apart from the music, seems to be that the characters have the same names. Definitely on the credit side, however, were Bernard Lamotte's charming décor and his lovely costume designs, which were superbly carried out by Karinska.

Balanchine's *Pas de Trois* to Minkus music seemed completely different from the essential Balanchine style, and the one-act *Swan Lake* has been "restudied" to such an extent that, as John Martin stated in the *New York Times*, it came "very close to mayhem." On the other hand, the company gave a remarkably fine account of themselves in *Raymonda*, giving it a sparkling and fresh performance.

Coming at the conclusion of their cross-country tour of America by bus, during which they visited 93 cities, the season made one marvel at the fact that the company as a whole had such verve and vitality in everything they danced. One can only admire and respect them for their hard work, gallantry and spirit, while wishing that they had fresher settings, better lighting. finer musical accompaniment and a more definite and forthright artistic policy.

HARLIQUINADE: *Nina Novak, as Columbine, between Alan Howard, as Harlequin, and Eugene Slavin as Pierrot. In New York, the first two rôles were danced by Alicia Alonso and Igor Youskevitch. This Commedia dell'Arte ballet, based on Drigo's* Les Millions d'Arlequin, *was the last work created by Boris Romanoff before his recent death. The scenery and costumes are by Rolf Gerard.*

LA DAME A LA LICORNE: *Nina Novak, as the White Unicorn in Heinz Rosen's ballet inspired by the famous French tapestries. The theme of the ballet is virginity; according to the legend the unicorn will eat only from the hand of a virgin. The story of the ballet was written specially for Rosen by Jean Cocteau and first given in Munich some years ago. The original production was also designed by Cocteau.*

SOMBREROS: *Irina Borowska and Deni Lamont in Leon Danielian's ballet based on Mexican folk songs and dances. This was the first essay in choreography by the well-known dancer and it also amounted to the most successful of the new works shown by Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo during their New York season at the Metropolitan Opera House.*

THE MIKADO: *Irina Borowska, Meredith Baylis and Rochelle Zide as Yum-Yum, Pitti-Sing and Peep-Bo, the "Three Little Maids from School" in Antonia Cobos' ballet version of the Gilbert and Sullivan opera. The main merit in this work, which Ballet Russe gave in New York, lay in the costumes and scenery by Bernard Lamotte. Sullivan's music was re-orchestrated and adapted by Vittorio Rieti.*

COMPANY FOR EASTER: Members of John Taras's Les Ballets de Pâques (with the exception of Vyroubova, Amiel and Algaroff) surrounding the bust of Hector Berlioz on the terrace of the Casino at Monte Carlo. Milorad Miskovitch is in the centre of the front row. In the second row are Milko Sparemblek with Veronika Mlakar and Tessa Beaumont with Vassili Sulich. In the centre of the back row is John Taras between Claire Sombert and Colette Marchand. *Photo: Oggero*

Riviera Rendezvous: 2

Last month the first programme of John Taras's Les Ballet de Pâques was described. Here is an account of the remainder of the repertoire given by the company assembled for the Easter season in Monte Carlo.

by PETER WILLIAMS

A REVIVAL of John Taras's *Designs with Strings* opened the second programme of Les Ballets de Pâques at the Monte Carlo Theatre on April 18. It is not because I was personally connected with this work as its designer, when it was first given by Metropolitan Ballet in 1947, that it holds a special place in my affections. It has always seemed to me that Taras has beautifully interpreted both the music and mood of the second movement of Tchaikovsky's A Minor Piano Trio. He has achieved a perfect miniature work which, although ostensibly plotless, still contains the ghost of an idea and the feeling of affection and frustration which is never far from the uncertain paths of adolescence. That is why it so perfectly suited Svetlana Beriosova and the Metropolitan dancers who originally created it. The emotions of the ballet were then something very real to them.

Since those days I have seen many mature and fine artists interpret this work, but their assurance and polish have failed to give the ballet the quality that seemed to me to be essential—splendidly danced though it may have been. I even doubt whether Beriosova would be right for it any more.

Taras was anxious to re-create *Designs* with as much of the feeling of the original production as was possible. He asked me to try and reconstruct the décor and costumes and also the original lighting plot. This I did while making a few alterations in the shape of the girls' tutus—it is strange how subtly and definitely the silhouette of the tutu can change in only a few years—plus a few modifications to the decoration on both the girls' and boys' costumes. Otherwise everything remained much the same as it used to be with Metropolitan Ballet.

Veronika Mlakar brought much of the same quality to the principal rôle as did Beriosova, who created it—the happiness and unhappiness of youth. She is a beautiful dancer with strong technique and a sensitive line; she is also a dancer who improves all the time. Her development, since she was first seen in England last year with Roland Petit's Ballets de Paris, has been remarkable. Milko Sparemblek made a very good partner for her. He is a dancer of such strong personality that there is a danger that he may become type-cast in character and *demi-caractère* rôles. Neo-classic parts of this kind make it clear that he can subdue his vitality effortlessly and not self-consciously as often happens when dancers of his calibre undertake more romantically classic rôles. Both these dancers made the *pas de deux* a tender yet exuberant expression of love.

Vassili Sulich, as the second boy, was adequate, but needed more experience to make this rather shadowy rôle flow effortlessly through the ballet. The other three girls—Jenny Trevelyan, Susan Richter and Vera Lazelle—were tall though well matched; they danced the *pas de trois* better and more in unison than I have ever seen it before.

Designs proved to be such a popular opening ballet that it was given more than its scheduled number of performances.

The next work in this second programme was:

Eternel Amour

Book by Serge Lifar. Music by Richard Strauss. Choreography by Serge Lifar. Décor and Costumes by André Levasseur.

JOSETTE AMIEL YOULY ALGAROFF
ARTHUR PLASSCHAERT

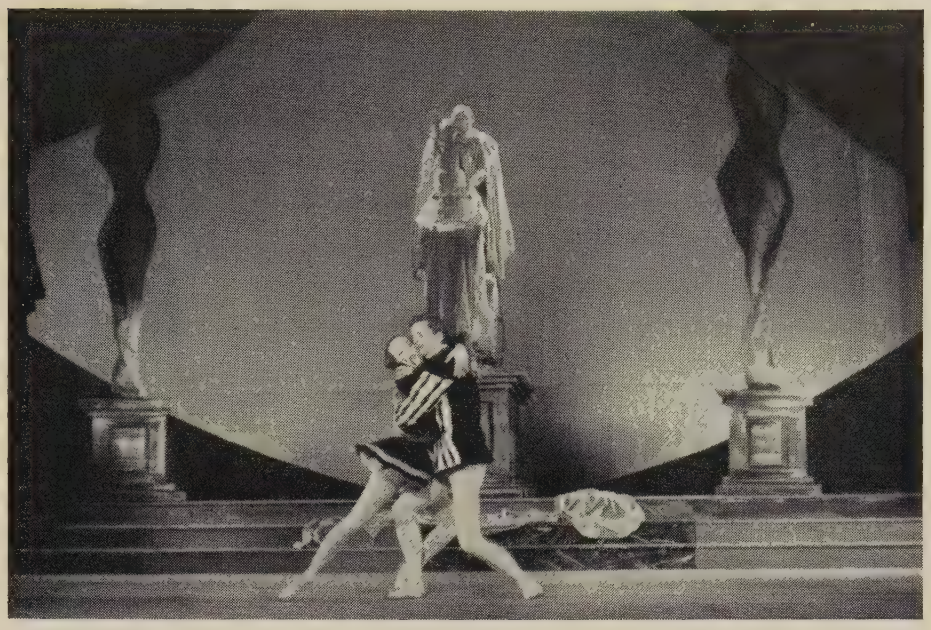
ALTHOUGH the programme makes no mention of Don Juan the fact that Lifar has used Strauss's symphonic poem on this subject, that Levasseur has based his costumes on Velázquez (period, *Las Meninas*), that the story concerns an amorous man, his loves and an avenging military spectre, would seem to suggest that the amatory exploits of the eternal libertine could not have been far from Lifar's mind. The only misleading factor is the title, because as far as I can remember Don Juan's escapades were hardly "eternal"; "one-night stands" would be a more apt description.

Lifar certainly seems to be running the gamut of the world's great love stories. One day they will collectively form a choreographic version of Canto V of Dante's *Inferno*. The trouble is that there is a monotonous similarity in all these elaborate and lengthy *pas de deux*. The gentlemen seem fated to appear with sword in hand which, after a few thrusts at nothing in particular, is unceremoniously and noisily thrown into the wings. The ladies, in addition to an exhausting *tour choréographique*, have to undergo a number of costume changes.

Eternel Amour ran true to form. Algaroff, a most plausible and handsome Don Juan, indulged in sword play; Josette Amiel had four costume changes presumably as Dona Anna, Dona Elvira, Zerlina and the ghost of all three. Arthur Plasschaert as Don Pedro

also did a bit of delving into his earthly and spectral wardrobe. Everybody had a very busy time.

The choreography also busied itself on lines which ran parallel to the music without hardly touching it at any point. The clever positions into which Lifar gets his dancers, and which some years ago seemed at least to be interesting, are clever no longer. In fact, two fine artists danced themselves to exhaustion without creating any effect on the audience other than bewilderment. This was a pity because Algaroff has a very noble stage presence and Amiel is an Opéra dancer whose development is most interesting. Unfortunately she is inexpressive and in this work she ran, in the words of Dorothy Parker about another theatre artist, "the gamut of emotions from A to B." Plasschaert had little to do other than flap around bearing a strong resemblance to the eagle in another Lifar work which had something to do with the death of Napoleon. This work, which was not one of Lifar's happiest creations, was followed by:



ETERNEL AMOUR: *Josette Amiel and Youly Algaroff in Lifar's ballet on the Don Juan theme, which he created for them to the music of Richard Strauss's symphonic poem.* *Photo: Lido*

Quatuor

Book by Milko Sparemblek. Music by Raffaelo de Banfield. Choreography by Milko Sparemblek.

VERONIKA MLAKAR
TESSA BEAUMONT
MILKO SPAREMBLEK
VASSILI SULICH

THIS ballet concerns youthful relationships, the discovery of love, the fear of loneliness, and so on. Whereas Taras, in *Designs for Strings*, hints at these adolescent stirrings, Sparemblek makes them the main body of the work. He treats the theme with more violence and with a more Modern Dance approach.

Sparemblek is a new disciple of the Maurice Béjart-Dick Saunders Left Bank French School, about which I wrote at some length in the last issue. He has obviously been influenced by them, and there is no harm in that. The only danger I can see in this present French choreographic trend is that it may be considered to be the ultimate and not merely as an interesting development. Where are they going and what is their aim? The next few years alone can supply the answer.

In the 'thirties, contemporary dance of the time got caught up in the wave of the movement which emanated from Central Europe. Whereas dance previous to that time had an upward surge, those Central European dancers made a sudden downward rush. The earth and its sub-surface seemed to be their goal. It was all very interesting and a most worthy attempt at discovering a new "horizon," but in the downward rush the dance tended to get stuck in the mud—not only stuck there but wallowing in it. No attempts at lightness seemed able to free it, with the result that the public eventually tired of so much sorrow and suffering in the theatre; the reality of the tragic world outside the theatre had sickened them of lugubrious ballets. Many people make the grave mistake of thinking that for a ballet to be serious it must also be agonised. It is not that these young French choreographers are showing any signs of getting stuck in a similar rut, but there is an obvious leaning towards the grimmer aspect of life and they should carefully watch that this trend does not become an obsession.

Sparemblek is actually a Jugoslav and is, as I have already stated, a very fine dancer. This fact is also important when considering his choreography, because he creates ballets with all the feeling for the dancer that is possible only from an experienced artist. Fokine, Massine and MacMillan are others in this category who immediately come to mind.

The choreography of Sparemblek is forceful and inventive. Some of his groups are very exciting and beautiful. The trouble is that he has yet to achieve the flow of movement which links them. When he can integrate these groups into the work as a whole he will have achieved something very worthwhile. In the meantime his progress as a creator should be watched with interest. It is only the great master who can achieve repose on the stage, the kind of repose which does not look as though the choreographer has run out of ideas. Sparemblek's dancers work tremendously hard and look as though they are doing so; their eventual breathlessness is apt to have an uncomfortable effect on the audience. Nevertheless, the four artists, lead by the choreographer himself, gave extremely polished performances which added considerably to the success of the work as a whole. I rather tremble to think what the ballet would be like without dancers of such distinction.

The setting consisted of a plain backcloth illuminated by spotlights, which were visible in the wings. The costumes were a collection of colourful rags. Raffaelo de Banfield's score bore a certain resemblance to his *Le Combat* but made no less good ballet music on that count.

This ballet was followed by:

Soirée Musicale

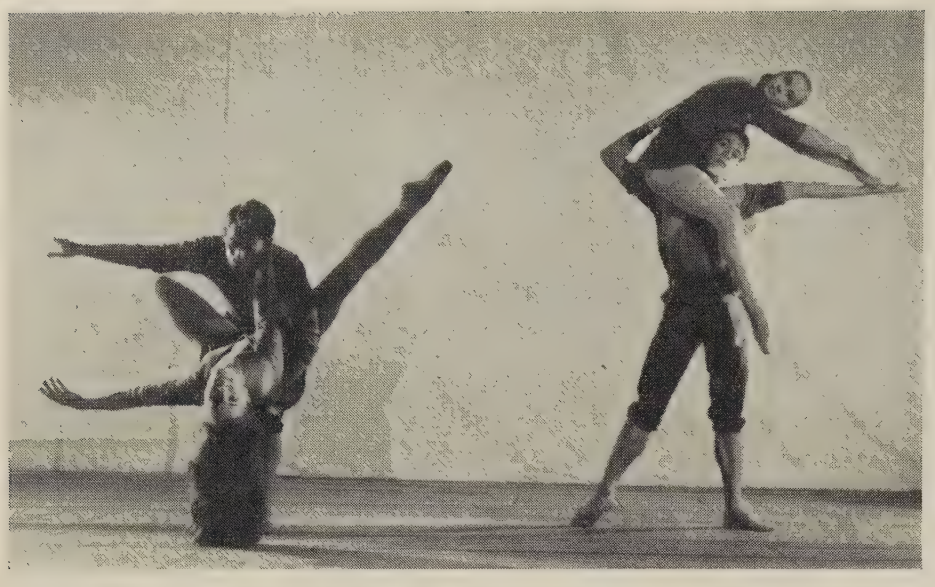
Choreography by John Taras. Music by Rossini, arr. Britten. Costumes by André Levasseur.

COLETTE MARCHAND
MILORAD MISKOVITCH

EVERYONE is allowed to make occasional mistakes and, considering all the fine things that Taras had created for this season, nobody really could complain about this one, which was of a very miniature variety.

These light, after-dinner pieces of Rossini are elegant froth, and the one thing that they completely lack is any sort of vulgarity. I just do not think that the choreography, which had choreographic humour, was right for Mar-

QUATUOR: *Tessa Beaumont, Milko Sparemblek, Vassili Sulich and Veronika Mlakar in Sparemblek's ballet for four people, which was created for the Monte Carlo season.* *Photo: Lido*



QUATUOR: *One of the many interesting groups in Sparemblek's ballet. Sulich is with Mlakar and Sparemblek has Tessa Beaumont on his shoulder.* *Photo: Lido*

chand. She is an artist whom one rather associates with revue and she gave her part of this *pas de deux* the full revue treatment. In the hands of a Markova or Fonteyn it would have made a very witty interlude in a programme of classical *pas de deux*. As it was, it merely became rather cheap; nor did it suit Miskovitch any too well.

When any music becomes associated with a particular ballet, specially if it happens to be a good one, future ballets created to the same score are bound to suffer by comparison. The fact that Antony Tudor created a charming and witty ballet to this Rossini-Britten *Soirées Musicales* did not help Taras. The fact that the music of Rossini is gay and most eminently danceable does not mean that it is necessarily right for a music hall caper.

After having seen four works in this programme, using dancers ranging in numbers from two to six, the evening ended using all the resources of the company in:

La Fôret Romantique

Choreography and production by John Taras. Music by Alexander Glazounov. Décor by Georges Reinhard.

NINA VYROUBOVA
CLAIR SOMBERT
HELENE ARMFELT
VERONIKA MLAKAR
VASSILI SULICH
MILKO SPAREMBLEK

Corps de ballet

ALMOST everything that can be said about the Romantic ballet has been said in *La Sylphide* and in Fokine's *Les Sylphides*. In fact, contemporary works based on woodland nymphs and fairies are bound to suffer by comparison. It is therefore quite an achievement to create a new Romantic ballet which is not a carbon copy of the aforesaid two works. The sylphs and nymphs of Taras's glade are not of the drifty, dreamy type, though some of them wear sylphide-like costumes. They are more like those who so suddenly and remarkably appear to Prince Florimund in a vision in the second act of the Tchaikovsky-Petipa *Sleeping Beauty*. In the beginning I thought that the mixture of sylphide skirts for the *corps* and short tutus for the principals was a mistake, but as the exuberance of Glazounov's music (*Les Saisons*) took hold of me, I realised that it was the right treatment for this Maryinsky salad.

Taras has shown a sensitive understanding of his masters—Petipa and Ivanov—and of the spirit of the composer. The work abounds in invention which never steps outside the boundary of Romanticism or is used just for the sake of showing that he can be inventive. Balanchine and Ashton are the only other two choreographers who could achieve these *entrées*, *soli* and *ensembles* with the same feeling of music and period.

It is a new experience to have a "white" ballet which also makes a rollicking closing ballet. Towards its close, the ballet works up to almost the same pitch of excitement as does Harald Lander's *Etudes*. Admittedly this comes more from the work of the principals rather than from the company as a whole, and Nina Vyroubova turns the whole thing into a splendid piece of bravura which roused the rather frigid Monte Carlo audience to a state of, for them, near-frenzy. Everything this artist does she now performs to perfection and she is in the class, whose number is less than the digits on a normal pair of hands, with the right to the exalted title of "prima ballerina assoluta." But in praising the work of this great artist, the dancing of Mlakar and Sombert should not be overlooked. Both in their ways were excellent and Sombert gave an immaculate performance of a very difficult variation.

The work opened with solo for a black sylphide which Hélène Armfelt danced in a spotlight. It seemed rather pointless, unless it was a subtle dig at those Romantic scenes which invariably open with witches brewing evil. Anyway, this interlude could be omitted to the advantage of the work as a whole. Otherwise the ballet could become a most valuable addition to the repertoires of other companies and it would be splendid for showing guest ballerinas at open-air festivals. The third programme of the season which was first shown on Easter Sunday, April 21, opened with a revival of *Designs with Strings* and continued with:

Prométhée

Ballet by Pierre Rhallys. Choreography by Maurice Béjart. Music by Maurice Ohana. Setting and costumes by Bernard Daydé.

Cast

Prometheus MILORAD MISKOVITCH
Guardian of the Fire VERONIKA MLAKAR
The Creature CLAIRE SOMBERT
The Three-headed Monster
LEO LAUER, JOSE LOBAO, ALAN KIRK

THE Prometheus story is one that has often attracted choreographers. Salvatore Viganò used the theme most successfully in Italy at the beginning of the last century, Serge Lifar created a notable work at the Paris Opéra before the war, and so did Ninette de Valois at Sadler's Wells—but that was not a very notable success.

Journeys and encounters have great possiblities as ballet subjects, as they can form the thread in a divertissement type of work. The journey of Prometheus to gather spiritual fire from the gods and bring it back to enrich mankind, his fight with the monster which guards the sacred world, how he gives breath to

LA FORET ROMANTIQUE: *The finale of Taras's Romantic ballet to Glazounov's* The Seasons. *In the front row are: Sparemblek, Mlakar, Vyroubova, Sombert and Sulich.* *Photo: Lido*

petrified creation only to suffer torture and crucifixion, has a mystical significance which has a certain parallel in the life of Christ.

This most recent version by Maurice Béjart showed an interesting development in his work. He seems to have discarded the anger of his previous works, or perhaps one should say he has diverted it into more profound channels, because nobody could say that the theme of Prometheus's quest lacks a certain amount of anger and irony.

The work was presumably created with the idea of giving Miskovitch an important rôle and in this Béjart had admirably succeeded. Miskovitch, in his turn, had grasped the potentiality of the rôle in both hands and turned it into an exciting and moving theatrical experience. I have never seen him better.

I did not particularly care for the opening of the work when he encounters the three-headed monster, but then I have yet to see "monster" choreography which sent any kind of shiver down my spine; usually ballet monsters are more comic than anything else. In this case the three dancers were connected by some rubber cord, and although it was an ingenious way of conveying the monster's ubiquitous quality, it seemed to me that it was a further step in Béjart's obsession with ropes and cords. However, by the time Prometheus had defeated this obstruction to his quest, Béjart had also got this obsession out of his system—or almost. Now I come to think of it, Claire Sombert, as the Creature, was frozen in a swing of ropes, though they did not become involved in the choreography.

The kingdom of the gods into which Prometheus then enters is a strange one and very well designed by Bernard Daydé. There is no colour, just glittering white objects like icebergs against black curtains. The Guardian of the Fire is enthroned in a "white-hot" construction. When Prometheus carries the sacred fire to the four corners of the world, represented by four minor icebergs at each corner of the stage, they light up with a blue flame. This gives the work a mystic feeling and it was a relief to find that Bernard Daydé had not fallen into the trap that might have ensnared many a less sensitive designer of making the fire flame-coloured. Both the encounters with Mlakar and Sombert are conceived with originality and invention and Béjart has shown an intelligent sense of what real choreography amounts to, as well as an obviously deeply-felt understanding of the symbolic mysticism which underlines the legend.

Much the same could be said of Maurice Ohana's score. It was forceful without being aggressive and perfectly realised the significance of the libretto. What was more, it also seemed to be good ballet music, working with and for the dancers rather than against them.

The whole work, which is in the repertoire of Miskovitch's "Ballets 1956" group, was given an immaculate performance by all three principals. Apart from the real pleasure this ballet gave me, I shall long remember the poignancy of the final tableau, when the crucified figure of Prometheus, suspended between two ropes, is drawn up to the wings as the curtain falls.

Perhaps Béjart was unconsciously influenced by Jean Cocteau who, more than anyone else in this century, has brought a new approach to the myths and histories of those lands lapped by the Aegean.

On the other hand, it may have been the scenario of Pierre Rhallys which gave the ballet its particular quality. He, like Bertrand Castelli, who was responsible for that remarkable work *Les Algues*, seems to have the touch of a poet, which ballet so badly needs at this time.

Choreographers all over the world search feverishly for ideas as subjects for their creations. In the end, their failure to discover anything original leads to trite little subjects which they have cooked-up themselves. Here it seems are two young Frenchmen, the poetry of whose ideas could add the greatest distinction to ballet everywhere. Any choreographers who happen to read this could do worse than to remember these two names—Pierre Rhallys and Bertrand Castelli—and much of the time they spend hectically thinking up ideas could then be devoted to choreographic creation. They might be very surprised at the distinction their creations could suddenly acquire.

PROMETHEE: *Miskovitch, in the title-rôle, and Sombert, as the Creature, are seen before the Guardian of the Fire (Veronika Mlakar) in Maurice Béjart's ballet based on the Prometheus legend.* *Photo: Lido*

Romeo et Juliette

THERE is little more to be said about Lifar's version of *Romeo and Juliet*, to Tchaikovsky music, which followed. I have seen so many people dancing this *pas de deux* that it is far easier to name the people whom I have not seen dance it. Even those who go to ballet far less frequently than I must have seen this *pas de deux* at least once. The reason for mentioning this more than cursorily here, for it followed *Prométhée* in the third programme, is on account of the performance of Nina Vyroubova.

The ballet has all the usual quirks associated with Lifar *pas de deux* and which have already been mentioned when discussing Lifar's *Eternel Amour*; sword-play by Algaroff as Romeo, and exhausting choreography for both him and Vyroubova. But somehow these things vanish into insignificance when considering how much Vyroubova manages to bring to the rôle of Juliet.

I do not know if she has carefully studied the work of Ulanova in the full-length Bolshoi version of *Romeo and Juliet*, but I noticed a certain similarity between these two great artists. This was most apparent in the great sensitivity of Vyroubova's hands; when she lays her hand on Romeo's arm, I got the impression that I was seeing Ulanova all over again. She equally shows the same sensitivity when she puts a foot to the ground: her feet seem to caress the earth rather than land on it. The whole line of her body also has the same aristocracy.

HARLEQUIN DESIGNS: Sketch by André Levasseur for the two principals—Sparemblek and Colette Marchand—in Taras's Les Baladins *which describes an incident during the journey of a troupe of Commedia dell'Arte players. Photo: Oggero*

Vyroubova is the kind of ballerina who would, I think, have delighted Diaghilev, for she has a Slav temperament tempered with Western-European elegance. Although lacking the joyful abandon and freedom of the present Soviet school, she is the embodiment of the perfectly-schooled classicism which was so apparent in the dancing of Olga Spessivtzeva who, in many ways, Vyroubova strongly resembles.

In England, Vyroubova is mainly known for her never-to-be-forgotten performances, with Les Ballets des Champs-Elysées, in the title-rôle of *La Sylphide*. With the same company she was also enchanting as Swanilda in the second act of *Coppélia*. A short sojourn with Roland Petit during his first Ballets de Paris season at the Princes Theatre, did not add greatly to her reputation, except for one memorable performance of the *Rose Adagio* from *The Sleeping Beauty*. When she returned to England a few years ago with the Paris Opéra she had developed technically, but a certain hardness had crept into her work. Now she has left the Opéra, she has regained all the qualities she originally had in addition to a new-found mastery which was most noticeable in the three works in which she appeared during this Monte Carlo season.

As Juliet she is tender and unawakened in the opening passages of the ballet; she passes through adolescence to the full maturity of the work's final moments. All of this would be expected from an experienced artist in a long ballet, but in the brief span of this Tchaikovsky symphonic poem it is something quite different. The old love story thus becomes something real and not just another excuse for two people to dance. Vyroubova was well partnered by Algaroff, who can never fail to look like every romantic lover rolled into one. He has good looks and a perfectly proportioned figure.

This notable ballet experience was followed by:

POTENTIAL STAR: The son of Nina Vyroubova, who played a small part in Les Baladins, *being held up by the two stars of the ballet—Sparemblek and Marchand. The picture, taken during a rehearsal, gives some idea of the realisation, though incomplete, of the two charming black-and-white costumes, which are shown in the designs at the top of this page. Photo: Lido*

Les Baladins

(The Mountebanks)

Scenario and choreography by John Taras. Music by Jean-Michel Damase. Décor and Costumes by André Levasseur.

Cast

Les Amoureuses	COLETTE MARCHAND
	JENNY TREVELYAN
Harlequin	MILKO SPAREMBLEK
L'Amoureux	JANN BORALL

Corps de ballet of Strolling Players, Policemen, etc.

THE magic of the Italian strolling players, the Commedia dell' Arte, still persists. The subject has attracted composer, choreographer and playwright alike. One of the supreme achievements of the later Diaghilev period was Massine's *Pulcinella*, which could well be revived today and be as popular again as it was when first created. Many have since tried to evoke these wandering comedians in ballet, but nobody yet has equalled or even approached the complete understanding of the bold and subtle mischief which Massine so perfectly realised in his ballet—but one lives in hope.

Taras has only touched the surface of the teeming possibilities which the subject provides. The work is really too short for any of the characters to become firmly established. A troupe of players arrives at a provincial town; they prepare for their performance, during the course of which a member of the public recognises Harlequin as the father of her children. Harlequin, who is having an affair with a member of the troupe (Colette Marchand), is anxious to escape from his parental commitments. A chase ensues, during which the mother enlists the help of the local police. Harlequin, obviously used to disentangling himself from such situations, manages to evade capture and departs with the troupe, and with his arms around his lover Colette Marchand.

It is an idea which could form the basis of a slightly more weighty work than what we saw, and possibly Taras has ideas of developing this ballet into something more important. It has all the ingredients, but they still need a bit of master mixing.

Marchand did all she could with the rôle but it was not very well conceived and she seemed to belong more to a ballet from the

Empire Theatre in Leicester Square in Edwardian times rather than to 18th-century Italy. There was a good *pas de quatre* for some gossiping women and Jenny Trevelyan did much the same sort of things, this time supported by Jann Borall, that she did in the *pas de deux* from *Suite New Yorkaise*—namely, fine supported *jetés*.

The main impact of the work came from Sparemblek's Harlequin, who was a nimble cat-like creature who darted through the work like quicksilver and acted as a brilliant thread to bind the whole thing together. He had a remarkable short variation, so well danced that I feel somebody *must* put on a revival of Fokine's *Carnaval* just to show him as Harlequin.

André Levasseur designed the ballet entirely in black and white so that it took on the aspect of a Callot drawing, and it all looked quite charming. Jean-Michel Damase's score consisted of a theme for wind quintet and a number of variations for the orchestra. The theme which formed the music of the band which brought the troupe on stage, was repeated at the end to take them off. It is a score of which more will undoubtedly be heard.

With all his work on other ballets and in organising the whole season, Taras probably had to sacrifice a great portion of the time that he would in ordinary circumstances have devoted to this work. It is to be hoped that he considers this merely to be a very rough sketch for the ballet it could, with considerable re-working, eventually become.

The final work in this season was:

Fanfares Pour Un Prince

Ballet by André Levasseur. Choreography and production by John Taras. Music taken from the works of 17th-century French composers. Décor and costumes by André Levasseur.

Ballet originally created for the occasion of the marriage of Prince Rainier of Monaco to Princess Grace Patricia.

Princess of the Night CLAIRE SOMBERT
Prince of Light VASSILI SULICH
The Light VERONIKA MLAKAR
Corps de ballet of Messengers of the Night, Ladies of the Night, Shadows, Warriors, Ladies of Light.

CREATED as this work originally was for the International Sporting Club galas during last year's Rainier wedding festivities, it had not been seen previously either in a theatre or by the general public.

Much as I dislike ballets created only for special occasions being repeated after the occasion is past, I do feel that there is a little more excuse for this revival. It gave the public a chance of seeing Levasseur's magnificent costumes and also of witnessing a most lavish stage spectacle; in addition the whole work had been completely done over so as to suit the requirements of the theatre and of this group. This time it was even more lavish than before. The palace was invaded by clouds which evaporated as the Princess of the Night (Claire Sombert) descended in her chariot. As light comes, with its attendant warriors and ladies, the costumes become even more breath-takingly beautiful.

The two variations for Sombert and Mlakar had undergone a considerable change since first created by Toumanova and Clavier, not necessarily for the better, but they were more suited to the two dancers in question. Sombert made a delightful and fragile Princess of the Night and she scintillated in her variation. Oddly enough, this ballet was the one work in a, for her, very crowded season which did not seem right for Mlakar and, compared with the exciting extravagance of the other costumes, hers seemed rather ineffective.

FANFARES POUR UN PRINCE: *Claire Sombert, surrounded by the* corps de ballet, *in a revival of the spectacular masque which Taras originally created for the Rainier wedding last year. This was the first time that this ballet, then given at the Sporting Club, could be seen by the general public. Sombert is in the rôle originally created by Tamara Toumanova.* *Photo: Lido*

This evocation of a 17th-century court masque makes a sumptuous and visually satisfying closing ballet. In this vista of coloured feathers, rich velvets and stage effects, it is easy to overlook the choreography. What Taras has done is to use the steps of 17th-century court dances broadened out into contemporary neo-classicism. He has retained the style and manner of the period without resorting to the "daintiness" which mars most evocations of this period. Apart from anything else it is pleasant to see a stage spectacle conceived with such lavishness and with no money spared.

THE whole season gave the appearance of having had an immense amount of money spent on it, though in actual fact this was far from the case. Of course, Monte Carlo is lucky in that it has a beautiful theatre and all the attendant facilities which make such a season possible. But it is not only easy facilities that make a season an impressive theatrical experience—far more is needed. And here tribute must be paid to John Taras, who somehow managed to weld these variously assorted component parts into a very plausible whole.

You might say that with so many notable dancers this was not such a difficult problem, but one can have all the world's finest dancers and, presented without taste, they can appear as merely a collection of dancers and not as an integrated company. By carefully choosing his repertoire so that it was well-balanced and by giving great thought to programme planning, Taras managed to give the impression of a long-established company. He worked them hard and sometimes late into the small hours, but they never complained, so great was their respect for him and their faith in what he was doing.

Apart from the pleasure derived from the actual performances, it was also impressive to realise that this group, gathered together for only six weeks, had more of the appearance of a complete and permanent company than many that have been in existence for a far greater number of years.

Part of the secret of this success lies in Taras's innate sense of what is right in the theatre. I witnessed an interesting example of this during the final rehearsals of *Les Baladins*. This was a ballet upon which many of the company had pinned their hopes; in the rehearsal away from the theatre it had progressed easily. The first rehearsals in the theatre with costumes proved nearly disastrous —it amounted to less than nothing, though nobody said so in so many words. Taras instantly sensed this and managed mentally to put his finger on all the weak points. He changed little bits of choreography here and there and got Levasseur to make a number of necessary additions to the setting. The final result was very different and at each performance something was changed. Many another *maître de ballet* or choreographer would have been content to sit back and just write it off as one of their not-so-successful works. Such striving after perfection and the constant refurbishing and burnishing of ballet is something which the whole art of ballet is badly in need of everywhere.

Whether this season really marks the resurgence of a company in Monte Carlo remains to be seen. The dancers are again scattered across the face of the globe and their return to the Mediterranean in the near future is extremely doubtful. But whether they ever get together again or not, it is quite obvious from this Easter season that the experiment was more than worthwhile and that if new companies are to be formed—which we all hope will be the case—then the method of John Taras was definitely the right one.

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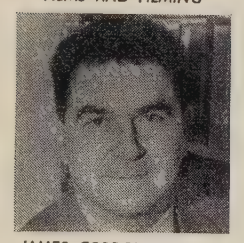

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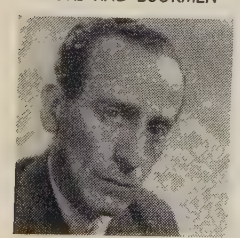

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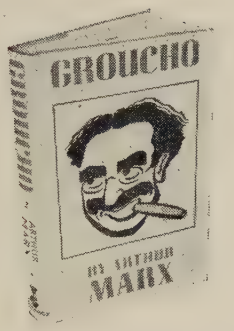

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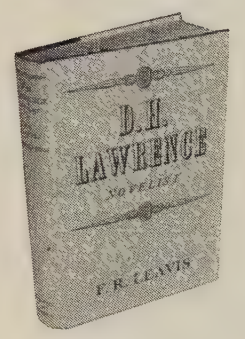

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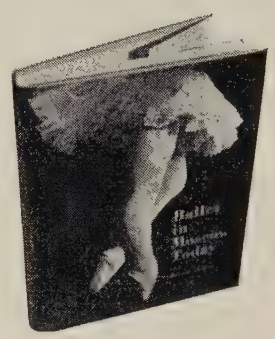

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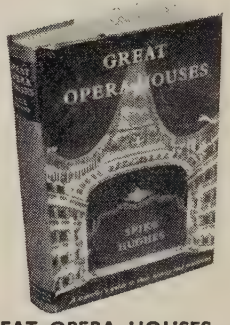

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So You Want to Dance?

Schools and Teachers
by E. C. MASON

AUDREY DE VOS looks down from the gallery of her Bayswater studio at four of her pupils. Among her staunchest supporters are Beryl Grey, who was a regular pupil for 10 years, Paula Hinton, Nadia Nerina, Marilyn Burr and Joyce Graeme. *Photo: Roger Wood*

Teacher with a forward-look

TO describe a teacher as unorthodox as Audrey de Vos, without making her appear to be eccentric or just awkwardly "different for the sake of being different," is no easy task. Her ideals, not surprisingly, are identical with those of other teachers. That is, she strives to produce dancers who are technically strong, but artistically sensitive and expressive. Because of this, and because many readers may have had their minds conditioned to the methods used by more conventional teachers, one must guard against making an article on her sound as if it was written on just another orthodox teacher. But, above all, no assessment of her work must make it appear less valuable than the alternative methods of traditional schools. Any such suggestion can be cancelled out to some degree when it is known that among her staunchest supporters are Beryl Grey (a daily pupil for 10 years), Joyce Graeme, Marilyn Burr and Paula Hinton.

De Vos has—in the view of some, unfortunately—always preferred to avoid publicity. But her influence on present-day teaching is undoubted and in many ways it is not untrue to say that her work as an innovator has received greater recognition overseas and on the Continent than it has in this country. The reason for this isolation from the public eye is not that she considers herself above it all or too superior to associate with other teachers, but because she feels that there is so much research for her still to do on the practice of teaching that there is no time left to lead a public life.

I think, therefore, that the best approach towards understanding her work and appreciating where the differences lie between her and other teachers is in realising that, although a classically trained dancer herself, she has, since she became interested in teaching over 30 years ago, accepted nothing without question. As she herself says: "I believe in doubt." If some of her teaching is completely orthodox, however, it is because she has re-examined exhaustively the whole question of dance for the stage and has retained all those academic principles which she considers are applicable today. While we have many excellent custodians of the past, never before have so many of the established teachers devoted so little of their energies towards experiment on the technical side of tradition. De Vos is largely concerned with future trends and could justly be termed forward-looking. Moreover, some of her principles which have been most criticised have since been widely adopted.

Not "method" tuition

She is not a teacher who has worked out a new method in a short time. Her principles of tuition have been evolving over many years and they are still developing. "Every day," de Vos says, "I learn something from my pupils. However, I refuse to call my system of teaching a 'method.' I don't like the term. It has a dreadful air of *finality* about it. If certain past teachers were alive today, they might be surprised to discover that their systems of teaching, which were admirable for the conditions they were working under, had been codified and written down as permanent, irrevocable syllabuses."

One of her great strengths is her knowledge of anatomy in its particular application to dancing. In fact, I think she is the only teacher who can be called to mind who realises that the bodies which dancers are using today are very different from those of dancers even 40 years ago. Today they are conditioned to quite different circumstances and actually perform, very largely, completely different functions. For example, the principles laid down by the famous teachers of the past, and which were so rigidly adhered to by their disciples, were developed on and for pupils who lived and worked together for many hours of the day every day of the week. These principles, therefore, do not necessarily apply to present-day dancers who are subjected to ever-greater strains and stresses as the pace of life gets faster and faster.

A system for today

With these conditions ever in mind, de Vos's teaching has reached a point where it has become, she hopes, more suitable and scientific for the present day than the traditional systems. She realises that, with the lives they lead, most students today are unable to do more than a certain amount. They have neither the time nor spare energy to be able to perform dozens of *grands battements* in each position, *ronds de jambe sautés*, and so on, on the basis that if they do enough of a particular step it is bound to do them good. Instead, she teaches her students how to get the *maximum* benefit from each movement. At the purely physical level, she ensures that her students understand which muscle is operative in performing any movement—so that there will be no wastage of energy in using a dozen muscles when one will do.

"Any pupil with a satisfactory physique can usually progress with a sound teacher, but a pupil with physical peculiarities can be unlucky—which," says de Vos, "is putting it mildly." She believes that in most cases the liabilities can be turned to assets. To use a crude example: a tall dancer who is over-conscious of her height can be encouraged to exploit it by developing a beautiful *port de bras* and heroic line. On the other hand, she considers that it is often a positive advantage to have the challenge of physical difficulties to overcome, because this helps to develop stamina, without which it is impossible to survive the hardships of a dancer's life.

Her diagnostic eye

A tremendous amount of time is spent by de Vos on what could be called "remedial" work—remedial in the sense that she attempts to re-mould dancers who have had their muscles wrongly or over-developed. And it

could be argued that she has had her most striking successes in this field. Here, if given the full co-operation of the student, who must be prepared to accept and have faith, she is invariably successful. Consequently, she devotes a considerable amount of her time to correcting purely physical faults. She has, what I term, a diagnostic eye—an eye not only for detail, but for the right detail.

While she gives a tremendous amount of guidance, she is aware of the dangers of over-correction. To keep telling a pupil about a particular fault over and over again may result in the pupil not being able to think about anything else when on stage. Rather than say firmly: "*Don't* do that, it looks dreadful," she prefers the constructive approach: "It would look so much better if you *did* that."

Having developed the right combination of muscular elasticity and strength—which she calls "muscle-tone"—she then concentrates on correct placing: that is the even distribution of weight to give both speed and control. She abhors any over-developed muscles and concentrates a great deal on hip-control and spinal strength. She is aware of the paradoxes of dance training which often necessitate employing opposing means to get the same results from two different students. But, in all her work, particularly in the breaking-down of superfluous or badly "toned" muscle, she receives valuable assistance from Janet Albisser, whose understanding of her technique and ability to carry it out is phenomenal.

To acquire correct posture, everyone attends the conditioning classes first. These are the introduction to both ballet and modern and the best results are always obtained from those who attend both. The modern classes not only speed up physical improvement, but also make the students who have had exclusively classical backgrounds much more expressive than the average classical dancer. If consistently attended, the conditioning and modern classes give a much greater fluidity and strength to the top half of the body. Moreover, it must be stressed that ballet tuition is combined with modern, and neither stands by itself if the best results are to be hoped for.

Classes do not begin with *pliés* at the *barre*. Instead, students start with exercises designed to *relax* and warm the body, which she says "are not a general flopping about." Free, swinging movements, both straight and rotatory, are used to free the action of the leg from the hip. A good turn-out is achieved without strain by special non-ballet methods.

In view of this physical emphasis, it is hardly surprising that occasional accusations are made to the effect that de Vos neglects aesthetic values and dance feeling. The exact opposite is the case. Her aim is to create dancers with so strong a technical foundation that, as she puts it, "they may, with skilled economy of effort, free their minds from all technical preoccupation, and thereby concentrate solely on interpretation." Having created the instrument, she does not seek to impose a particular style upon it, but encourages individuality and, above all, adaptability. She does not want to produce a "type" or create dozens of prototypes of herself.

Pictorial effects

"A dancer," de Vos says, "should think of the body as a full orchestra which he or she is capable of conducting, with different muscles to draw upon to get the different musical qualities of light and shade. A dancer must be able to articulate with every muscle and joint." To stretch this analogy further, she says that particular qualities of movements can be conveyed by such expressions as "it is a long, sustained violin note," or "a sudden percussion effect." She uses word pictures such as these to get effects which she could not obtain by other means.

PROMISING PUPILS: Audrey de Vos demonstrating to Ynaiel Oved, Vera Lazelle, Susan Richter and Jenny Trevelyan. The last three were members of John Taras's Ballets de Pâques in Monte Carlo. Their work with that company is reviewed on page 12. *Photo: Roger Wood*

At her best, she produces dancers who have all the speed, control and precision of the very best classical dancers, allied to a range of expressive movement far wider than that possessed by most dancers. At a lower level, she produces sound all-round dancers capable of any demands made by the commercial stage. Her best results are achieved with dancers of above average intelligence. She is, therefore, an ideal teacher for those who are prepared to analyse and think about what they are doing. "But not everyone," she says, "will find me a suitable teacher. Pupils deeply embedded in routines of blind following may prefer to study elsewhere." A certain amount of patience is called for as, in some cases, it requires regular attendance at classes for some months before the student becomes aware of what she is aiming at. Much is a matter of "the long run," but after a period of perhaps a year, an intelligent dancer should be able to understand and retain the value of all her corrections.

It should be mentioned that she does not teach tricks: she teaches technique in the fullest sense of the term. By following the basic principles of her teaching to their fullest conclusions, dancers are able to perform highly advanced technical steps quite naturally. This produces the kind of technique which can be called upon on "off-days," when inspiration is absent and the flesh unwilling: a most valuable asset for a dancer who spends half the year on tour. She does not plan classes beforehand, she has an excitable and fertile imagination, and she possesses herself the drive and inspiration that make her students want to dance better.

News of Schools and Teachers

Leeder Summer School

SIGURD LEEDER will hold his annual Summer School from August 21 to September 3. This year's syllabus will consist of two separate courses covering different aspects of modern dance training. The object of the first course, consisting of 36 classes, is to give a practical technical understanding of the laws which govern movement. The second course is a production one designed to work out, from the idea to the actual performance on stage, a new group composition.

Unable to make the Trip

MATHILDE KSCHESINSKAYA, who was scheduled to preside at the Seventh Annual Congress of the Federation of Russian Classical Ballet from May 20 to 25, was unable to come to London owing to ill health. It had been her most fervent wish to fulfil this engagement. Tamara Karsavina therefore kindly consented to preside over all the Congress activities.

Turkey Bound

RICHARD BROWN, who was teaching for Audrey de Vos and Margaret Morris, has gone to Turkey to work with Molly Lake and Travis Kemp at the State School of Ballet in Ankara.

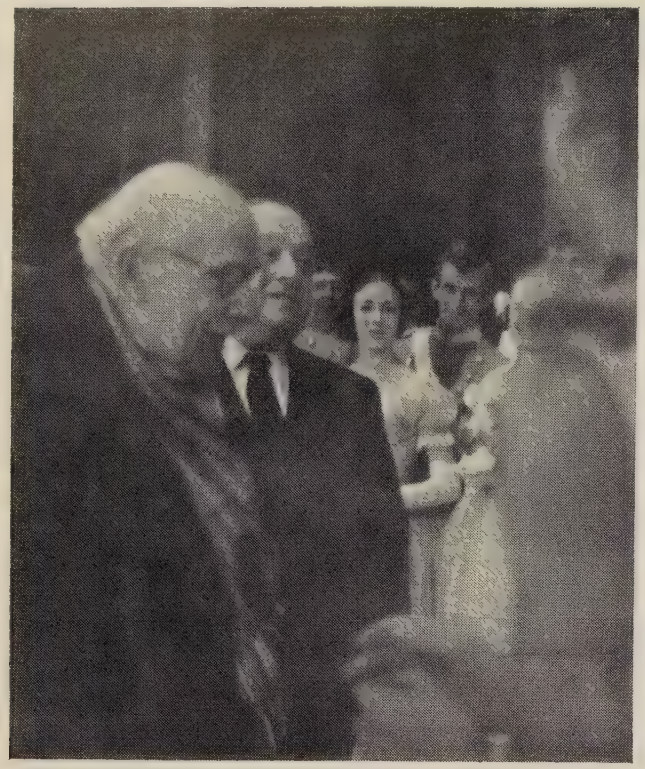
Chicago calling

ROBERT LUNNON, a former member of the Royal Ballet, and who for two years was a teacher in the State Conservatoire in Ankara and later was ballet master and principal dancer with the Norwegian Ballet in Oslo, has left for America where he will join the faculty of the Allegro School in Chicago.

More Notation systems

ANN HUTCHINSON recently made a trip to Rome to study two systems of movement notation—those of Father Remigio Zadra and of Madame Jia Ruskaja. The former uses stick-figure symbols and certain conventional signs in a system aimed at developing the aesthetic sense of children through ryhthmic movement. Madame Ruskaja started working on her system in 1940 before she was aware of the existence of other systems. Her method is worked out scientifically, her signs are few and are placed on a pentogram representing the body, reading from left to right.

curtain up!



DISTINGUISHED VISITOR: Alexandre Benois, one of the prime movers in the formation of Diaghilev's Russian Ballet, rarely goes to the theatre. Recently he redesigned Lichine's Graduation Ball *for Festival Ballet, and the première was given during the company's Paris season at the Champs-Elysées Theatre. Benois, with Festival's director Julian Braunsweg in the background, is seen backstage after the first performance. He declared himself delighted with the way the ballet had been carried out and there is a possibility that he may design another work for the company.*

Photo: Mike Davis

Limón for the Wells

IN spite of the fact that the Directors of Sadler's Wells Theatre are giving up the responsibility of administering the company which has been known for many years as the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, it seems that the theatre itself might become the future home for visiting dance companies.

After the July season of the Royal Ballet from Sadler's Wells, Ballet Rambert goes into the theatre at the end of the month. If the Rosebery Avenue theatre can house this important British company for a regular season throughout the year, then the theatre will be admirably fulfilling the purpose for which it was originally intended.

Hot on the heels of this news comes the announcement that José Limón and his company will be appearing there during September. As the second London ballet theatre to Covent Garden, which anyway would be too large for a group such as Limón tours, Sadler's Wells is to be congratulated for having found a place for this most important American Modern Dance company, on which it is doubtful whether any commercial management would risk their shekels.

If Sadler's Wells can shape its future policy to include seasons by all the world's great dance companies then the future should look brighter for the theatre than it has at any time since those palmy days before the war.

Fifield goes home

THE call of Australia seems to be loud and persistent, rather like a siren song—though I hope that those who answer its call do not suffer the same fate as did those sailors of ancient legend, namely of landing on the rocks. Margot Fonteyn, Rowena Jackson, Michael Somes and Bryan Ashbridge are in the midst of a month of guest performances with the Borovansky Ballet. Kenneth Melville left Festival Ballet to become a more permanent member of the company, or at any rate for a year. Alexis Rassine has been rumoured to be joining the company later. Now Elaine Fifield has answered the call and will leave the Royal Ballet at the end of the present Covent Garden season to return to her native country—apparently for good.

She will become the permanent ballerina of the Borovansky Ballet, where no doubt she will receive more opportunities than a company such as the Royal Ballet are ever likely to be able to give her. Although it is right that a dancer who has reached certain heights, as she undoubtedly has, should become the first ballerina in her native country, I cannot help but be very sorry that she should be leaving at this particular moment.

Fifield's career has not been quite the ascending curve it promised to be. Outstanding as the leader of the Theatre Ballet at Sadler's Wells, she became rather lost in the Covent Garden company after she was moved. Her early ascendance there to the position of ballerina did not do all for her as was expected. But many dancers, moved from the one company to the other, have suffered the same comparative obscurity after their initial transplanting. In recent weeks, however, Fifield has started to blossom out to become the very fine artist she always promised to be. It is a pity that she could not have held back her departure until after the new blossoming became a full-flowering. Now it seems that the Australians will get the full benefit of her maturity and we are glad for them, though it does not lessen our sorrow at her going.

Rambert pioneers still further

MARIE RAMBERT has always been a pioneer and now she is to take her company into a country entirely new to British ballet—China. The company embarks on a two-month tour, planned to open in Pekin in mid-November. They will fly to Prague and then on to Moscow, where they will stay for one night and watch a performance of the Bolshoi Ballet in its own theatre before setting off on the last lap of their journey. The company will be led by Ann Horn, Norman Dixon, Patricia Dyer, John Chesworth and Gillian Martlew.

Before then, the Rambert season at Sadler's Wells will be enhanced by guest appearances by a ballerina who is a firm favourite in London—Violette Verdy. She first came to London as a very young dancer in Les Ballets des Champs-Elysées, when she was known as Nelly Guillerme. Later she returned, under her present name, as a star of Roland Petit's Ballets de Paris. She has also made some appearances here on television, notably in Kenneth MacMillan's *Turned Out Proud.*

Inland Revenue views on Ballet

ACCORDING to the North-West London Valuation Panel, ballet is not a fine art. The Royal Academy of Dancing recently appealed in respect of the rating of their premises in Holland Park Gardens. The appeal was dismissed because the majority opinion of the panel was that the Academy was not a society instituted for the purposes

A DANCER'S DAY: 4 — *Shoe fitting*

of Science, Literature or the Fine Arts exclusively in accordance with the 1843 Scientific Societies Act.

The difficulty arose when the Academy, of which the Queen is the Patron and Dame Margot Fonteyn the President, changed its address from unrated premises to rated premises last year. The Inland Revenue submitted that ballet was certainly not a fine art, but that even if it was, the Academy's pursuit of education, teaching, folk-dancing and the sale of dance uniforms and books, were outside the category of fine arts.

It is hard to know what is a fine art if the teaching of dancing is declared to be not so. In 1843 when this act was passed, doubtless the art of dancing was not held in very high esteem, but over a century has passed since then and today ballet is the art which has brought the greatest honour to Britain. Someone, it seems, like Princess Aurora, has been asleep for a hundred years!

Choreographers together

WITHOUT the choreographer, ballet would not exist, and it has always been my opinion that as much attention should be paid to choreographers as to ballerinas. It is gratifying to learn that Aix-Les-Bains also apparently realises this. At their fourth annual festival, from July 20 to August 4, they will also hold the first World Congress of Choreographers. The purpose of this congress is to discuss the formation of an international organisation of choreographers and all matters concerning choreography, both technical and artistic, as well as forms of choreographic notation.

In the International Academy of Choreographers who will head the Congress, Britain is represented by Frederick Ashton. I sincerely hope that as many choreographers as possible from all over the world will attend the congress, which takes place between July 31 and August 5.

Cross channel honours

FRANCE has recently honoured two people who have done fine work in establishing understanding of the art of ballet between England and France. Marie Rambert and Peter Daubeny have both been made *Chevalier* of the *Légion d'Honneur*. Rambert has done more than anyone in British ballet to encourage the use of French composers, and Peter Daubeny has been tireless in bringing French dance companies to London over the past eight years.

No dazzlers for Leslie

HOW would you like, at a moment when you were supposed to occupy the stage alone for some time, to find that your essential props were missing?

This happened to Leslie Edwards as the *Hypnotist* in MacMillan's *Noctambules* at a recent Covent Garden performance. He was left without the mirrors he uses to dazzle the audience but fortunately, being an experienced artist, he managed to fill in the gap. There have been many such mishaps recently at the Garden—curtains going up or coming down at the wrong time, trapdoors failing to descend and doors refusing to open. On one occasion it was impossible for the Blackamoor to kick Petrushka out of his cell.

For such things to happen to a touring company is possibly understandable. In a national theatre with a large staff it should certainly be possible to delegate someone to see that this kind of thing does not happen twice.

Stravinsky's three-quarter century

THE scores by Igor Stravinsky for *Petrushka*, *The Firebird* and *Scènes de Ballet* are, in their different ways, so vigorous, original and exciting that it is difficult to believe that the composer is 75 years old this year. His birthday was on June 17 and with three such works in the repertory at Covent Garden, it might have been expected that a special performance would be given to celebrate it.

The Opera House authorities have a cavalier disregard for such occasions, however, and for the valuable publicity they could gain from them. An instance of the official attitude came recently when the Royal Ballet gave its first programme ever devoted entirely to ballets by Michel Fokine. This was in a sense an historic occasion, yet not a word was allowed to leak out. Heaven forbid that the Royal Ballet should take to giving galas with the frequency that is the custom in most countries where the word "gala" has come to mean less than nothing at all. But an occasional nod in the direction of the great names of the dance would be appreciated by many.

Marriage and old material

ANNE HEATON and John Field, both of the Royal Ballet from Sadler's Wells Theatre, have announced their engagement and plan to marry sometime in August.

JOHN HART is collecting all possible material in relation to the Royal Ballet companies for their Archives. Anything that you have which relates to these companies will be most gratefully received if you send the material to John Hart, c/o the Royal Ballet, The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London, W.C.2. But no old shoes, please!

Dancer of Today

JULIA FARRON

Photo: John Hart

BORN in London. Studied at Cone-Ripman School, later winning a scholarship to the Royal Ballet School. Made her début as principal dancer in a Drury Lane pantomime in 1934, *at the age of* 12. *Joined the Royal Ballet two years later. A principal soloist with the company since the war years.*

Creations: Pepé in A Wedding Bouquet; *Psyche in* Cupid and Psyche; *Faith in* The Quest; *The Wardrobe Mistress in* Adam Zero; *The Lady Belerma in* Don Quixote; *The Mother in* Donald of the Burthens; *Hannah in* A Mirror for Witches; *Diana in* Sylvia; *Neapolitan Dance in* Swan Lake; *Sybilla in* Rinaldo and Armida; *Belle Epine in* Prince of the Pagodas.

Roles include: Queen, Fairy of the Enchanted Garden, and Florestan Sister in The Sleeping Beauty; *Queen-Mother in* Swan Lake; *Prayer and Czardas in* Coppélia; *Prélude in* Les Sylphides; *Estrella in* Carnaval; *Tarantella in* La Boutique Fantasque; *Betrayed Girl in* The Rake's Progress; *Alicia in* The Haunted Ballroom; *Red Queen in* Checkmate; *Eurydice in* Orpheus and Eurydice; *Mlle. Theodore in* The Prospect Before Us; *Goddess in* The Gods Go A-Begging; *Milkmaid in* Façade; *White Skater in* Les Patineurs; *Countess Kitty in* Les Sirènes; *Violet in* A Wedding Bouquet; *Fairy Godmother and Autumn Fairy in* Cinderella; *Lykanion in* Daphnis and Chloe; *Prostitute in* Miracle in the Gorbals; *Queen in* Hamlet; *Mam'zelle Angot and Aristocrat in* Mam'zelle Angot; *Prima Ballerina in* Ballet Imperial; *Elvin rôle in* Ballabile; *La Favorita in* Veneziana; *the Faded Beauty in* Noctambules.

AT the beginning of her career Julia Farron was regarded as a classical ballerina in the making. Although she has never attained ballerina ranking, her importance to the Royal Ballet has greatly exceeded some of the other dancers who have. In Denmark or Russia her position of principal character dancer would be given principal status. In England we, in our childish wisdom, order these things differently.

During her career she has undertaken an astonishing range of rôles. Some, such as her notable appearances as the *prima ballerina* in *Ballet Imperial*, have been purely classical, but for the most part she has excelled in dramatic or character parts.

It would be pointless here to make a roll-call of her successes; her personality has stamped itself as indelibly on the national repertory as did Helpmann's. But to look into the future rather than the past, would it be too much to hope that the Royal Ballet could arrange with Lucia Chase for a Covent Garden production of Tudor's *Pillar of Fire* with Farron as Hagar? Probably it would.

happy birthday to...

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Anton Dolin	Festival Ballet	27
Alexander Bennett	Royal Ballet from Sadler's Wells	27
David Blair	Royal Ballet at Covent Garden	27
Jacques d'Amboise	New York City Ballet	28
Andrea Karlsen	De Cuevas Grand Ballet	30
		August
Susan Borree	Ballet Theatre	2
Georgina Parkinson	Royal Ballet at Covent Garden	2
Jacqueline Ivings	Canadian National Ballet	4
Doreen Tempest	Royal Ballet from Sadler's Wells	4
Howard Meadows	Canadian National Ballet	5
Leslie Edwards	Royal Ballet at Covent Garden	7
Richard Adama	Vienna Opera Ballet	8
Jack Carter	Choreographer in Holland	8
Naomi Ben-Ari	Ballet Rambert	9
Ronald Plaisted	Royal Ballet at Covent Garden	9
Georges Golovine	De Cuevas Grand Ballet	10
Diana Turner	Ballet Theatre	11
Sigurd Leeder	Teaching in London	14
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David Harding	Royal Ballet from Sadler's Wells	15
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British Audiences
as seen from America
by APOLLOS LEVABTOUYEFF

An impression of the British approach to ballet by a Russian living in America

THE English love their ballet and are rightly proud of it. This is one of the unexpected artistic events of the incredible 20th century. How then did the Muscovites dare to bring to London their ballet *Romeo and Juliet*, a production entirely made in Russia and based on Shakespeare's tragedy? This amounted to bringing coals to Newcastle! How then did it happen that these insolent foreign invaders were not thrown out by the indignant English, but instead were given a more thunderous ovation than they received in Moscow? It is the purpose of my article to give an explanation of this curious fact.

But first of all I must introduce myself. I am a Russian by birth, 81 years of age, who came to San Francisco in 1923 and where I have made my home permanently; and it is there that I saw the Sadler's Wells Ballet four times and Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet once.

I did not see the Soviet production of *Romeo and Juliet* in London, it was only my fortune to see the motion picture version filmed in the Crimea and starring the same artists. For those who love magnificent spectacle this picture, with its wonderful scenes of Renaissance splendour, is a real delight. It conveyed a certain idea of the acting and dancing of these Russian artists. I repeat, "a certain idea," for only professional film artists can project themselves successfully before the camera—others are sometimes good, sometimes not good at all! Even the great Pavlova cancelled all her dance films. Ulanova obviously is quite shy of the camera, for the last scene in the *Romeo and Juliet* film was completely bungled.

Hunger for beauty

In England, as in many other countries, the greater portion of the audience is composed of people who know little or nothing of ballet technique. They come to satisfy their hunger for beauty—they want aesthetics. The Russians love emotional drama and use it in the majority of their theatre productions—ballet included. The English before the First World War asked for intellectual drama, and at that time the whole population of Great Britain had for generations considered any expression of the emotions as a lack of self-control. Three noted playwrights who were popular in the English-speaking countries were Oscar Wilde, Bernard Shaw and Arthur Wing Pinero. Their masterfully constructed dramas displayed brilliant dialogue—but were devoid of any emotions.

Yet emotions in the theatre should not be looked upon as something unimportant. On the contrary, *they are very important*. They give us what the Greeks called "catharsis," they relieve us of our worries. And who does not need this in such a time as ours? It was this suppression of the emotions which developed in the England of that time the absence of creative and expressive musicians; and today as this suppression is being lifted, music is beginning to flower in England more than ever before.

In business, of course, the emotions are nothing but a handicap. In private life in a wrong time and amount, they are nuisances. But on the stage and in the concert hall they glitter and sparkle, and fascinate us more than anything else. And, to be sure, everybody knows that all famous artists have been extremely emotional.

Now after two world wars, we live in a time of change. The amazing development of science has opened for us unexpected horizons and new inventions have altered life around us unbelievably. Many old ideas, customs and institutions have been discarded, many others are in the process of being changed or dispensed with all over the world. One of these changes in England is that her people eventually have realised an emotional need. No wonder then that when the Bolshoi dancers bombarded their audiences with innumerable shades of moods, feelings and emotions, the younger generation of Britishers received just what they were craving and unsuccessfully searching for, and became unrecognisably enthusiastic.

Youth versus age

Here again we come to the question of the difference between the older and younger generations, which in this century and in all countries is striking; and, naturally, the demands in the arts of the two generations in England are sometimes also strikingly different. With respect to ballet, the older generation, a quiet one, prefers *The Sleeping Beauty*—aesthetics; the younger, being full of vitality and new ideas, wants emotions. Who is right? They are both right! They both realise the demands of their inner selves which are quite different. If we take into consideration that the younger generation represents the spirit of the 20th century, we must admit that to oppose them is useless.

To be a great artist is a divine gift; to be able to respond to the performance of a great artist is also a gift and a blessing. Emotional people may be lifted to the realms of sublime delights—the unemotional, never!

In all that I have read about the Russian dancers in London it was said that they had put their souls into all their presentations, Had they their shortcomings? All dancers without exception, have them. Technically, I do not think that they were bad. The Moscow school has good traditions—the great Carlo Blasis himself taught there for two years. Was there anything wrong with the style of these dancers? Ah, that is where their weakness lies! The audiences enthralled by these emotional Russians did not see, or just overlooked this defect, but the teachers of dancing (the horror of all dancers!) and some jealous artists picked up everything that was not done correctly.

Though I have not seen a Soviet ballet company, I have seen many ballet films made in the USSR. The ballet dancers in them, particularly the males, have a certain "moujik" character. How could it be otherwise, when all life in their country has this same flavour? To be sure, the combination of the style of Louis XIV and that of the Russian "moujik" cannot be called harmonious. Colhoz dancers (farmers) are always violent and smack of vulgarity, though they are quite temperamental. After the village life in Russia was so greatly changed, country dancers are now usually lacking not only in dignity, but in pastoral simplicity as well.

The English dancers are cultured and have no suggestion of vulgarity, but they have not yet learned how to express deep emotions as effectively as the Russians. Nevertheless, for everyday life their pantomime is excellent.

The English audiences proved themselves to be emotional. Artists are woven of the same emotional cloth as the audiences and, therefore, are potentially emotional.

Yesterday, when one of my English friends and myself were talking about ballet, he said: "I agree with you that my countrymen feel overfed with intellectual drama and want in their theatres emotional drama at all costs. And what do you think of the possibility of England having her own emotional ballet?" My answer was: "I am sure that this will come—as the natural result of the changes we are now witnessing in your country. Ultimately, or perhaps, by a trick of nature, even tomorrow, England will produce her own Pavlova and Ulanova."

The Royal Ballet on American TV

THE long-awaited coast-to-coast television broadcast of the Royal Ballet's production of *Cinderella* had, as might be expected, a tremendous viewing public. On the other hand, it received a decidedly mixed critical press. Walter Terry heralded it with unalloyed critical delight in the *New York Herald-Tribune*, while on another page John Crosby, the television critic, found fault with the photography, claiming that "ballet is not an art for close-ups; you must see the whole body." Jack Gould, writing in the *New York Times*, commented on the "restless camera work," as well as saying that "several scenes were cluttered and awkward, and the extreme close-ups injected a literal touch that did not enhance the sense of make-believe."

Everyone who witnessed this broadcast on a colour receiving set found the broadcast an enchanting visual experience. Watching it in black and white, however, as did 99 per cent of America, the figures seemed blurred at times and it was all but impossible to recognise the individual dancers who appeared as the four seasons.

Being a great admirer of the stage version of *Cinderella* when it was presented here in 1950, I must admit that I was markedly disappointed in the television version, chiefly, I suppose, because of the technicalities that are inherent in the medium. Whenever the camera was taken to the back of the studio, which it had to be to encompass the ensemble scenes, the dancing figures looked about three inches high and were unrecognisable. To compensate for this, the camera was brought in for bits and pieces of close-ups which stopped the flow of the ballet and only served to highlight strain and effort, thereby destroying one of the essential illusions of the art.

Although there was much to admire in Margot Fonteyn's dancing, this is not one of her most grateful rôles, and it would indeed be difficult for any dancer to surpass the essential rightness of Moira Shearer in this rôle. Missing, too, was Robert Helpmann's inspired sense of clowning. Portraying the same rôle of the step-sister on television, Kenneth MacMillan seemed to be trying too hard and was lacking in subtlety. On the other had, however, Frederick Ashton made a field day of his rôle as the other step-sister and practically danced off with the honours of the evening. Michael Somes made a handsome and gallant Prince, Alexander Grant was brilliant as the Jester, and Julia Farron made a delightful Fairy Godmother. It was most frustrating to have to strain for glimpses of Svetlana Beriosova, Elaine Fifield, Merle Park and Annette Page as the four seasons and I could only identify them by their costumes. Phillip Chatfield and the other cavaliers never got close enough to the camera for recognition at all.

Arthur Todd

FESTIVAL BALLET blazes across Europe

THE fantastic and well-deserved triumph of Festival Ballet in their trans-European tour has given British ballet one of the greatest fillips of recent years. They have trod where many an angel would think twice before putting a foot down and they have come through magnificently.

The successes of Oslo and Copenhagen were not so difficult to predict, though Copenhagen, brought up on its own great Royal Danish Ballet, was bound to be more critical. But the phenomenal success of their Paris season, at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, could hardly have been foreseen by even the most astute old clairvoyant.

In 1953 the company appeared at the Théâtre de l'Empire in Paris, when it could hardly have been said that they set the Seine on fire; but even then they nevertheless won many adherents. The company has, of course, matured since that time, but it was not virtually all that different a company which recently so securely won its laurels in the French capital. There is no doubt that the company's stars—Toni Lander, Belinda Wright, John Gilpin and Flemming Flindt—were partly responsible for this, but the general very high standard of the soloists and *corps*, plus much more intelligent programme-planning, also played a considerable part in winning the day.

The Paris critics were unanimous in their praise of the company which reached heights of acclaim unknown in British ballet criticism. C.B. in *Le Figaro* said, "I cannot think at the minute of one single company to rival this company in Harald Lander's *Etudes* . . . Its youth, its style and sense of rhythm and the humour that goes with it is at its best in the opposite style of *Symphony for Fun* by Don Gillis. And all this makes one of the best dance spectacles that we have seen this season in Paris."

W. L. Landowski in *Le Parisien*, ended a eulogy of the company with, "It is rare for me to really like a show, but this one proves so attractive . . . do not miss it!" And the remainder of the critics went on at length in the same vein. So, a British company has, at last, cracked that toughest nut of all ballet audiences and critics—Paris.

GILPIN IN COPENHAGEN: A new picture of Festival's male star who has won unanimous acclaim in all the European capitals where the company has recently played. *Photo: Mydtskov*

PARIS PREMIERE: Anton Dolin, Geoffrey Corbett (Festival Ballet's conductor), Serge Lifar and Princess Antoinette of Monaco after Festival Ballet's first night at the Champs-Elysées Theatre.

AMBASSADORIAL CONGRATULATIONS: Sir Gladwyn Jebb (British Ambassador in Paris) and Lady Jebb congratulating Julian Braunsweg (Festival Ballet's director) on the company's triumphant Paris opening.

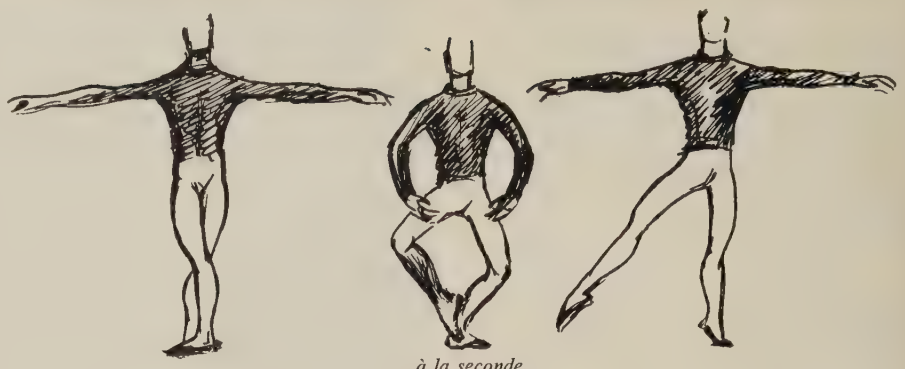
STEPS OF THE DANCE 25

by

BARBARA VERNON and JOHN GREGORY

Illustrated by EILEAN PEARCEY

Illustration 43 *Battements Fondus* to *demi-pointe*



à la seconde

BARRE IN THE CENTRE
Group 2 (continued)

Battements Fondus: *Plier* is to bend and *fondre* is to melt. In this step the word "melt" describes exactly the quality with which the knee bends. *Battement fondu* is the soft melting *plié* on one leg as the working leg is picked up quietly to *sur le cou de pied*, smoothly rising to straight leg on whole foot, or to *demi-pointe*, as the working leg unfolds in a *petit développé* to full stretch. The working leg should not be higher than supporting knee in extension—it is a beautiful low movement.

In executing *battement fondu* to *demi-pointe* considerable adjustment and control is required to obtain a steady balance. The rise from the *plié* is a steady pressing up, without jerking or fluffing. The arms synchronise smoothly, opening from first to second outwards to fourth position. There must be no tensions in the arms, no taking the strain. The body is held very erect, uplifted from the hips; a conscious pressing flat of the shoulder blades should be felt in the back.

In the junior class the *battement fondu* will be performed on the flat foot; in the senior class it will rise to the *demi-pointe*.

Fondu is such a fundamental step that it should never be left out of the class. It gives full play to the Achilles tendon, and cultivates that finishing attribute of all jumping steps—*ballon*. It also builds the foundations of poise.

Battement Frappé: *Battement frappé* has a dynamic impetus; from the relaxed position *sur le cou de pied* the lower leg from knee to toe flies out to full stretch. It is a vigorous movement in which the strong accent is usually on the outward thrust. The height of the extension should be about mid-calf.

In *enchaînement* the *battement fondu* may be preceded or followed effectively by two or three *battements frappés*. The quick sharp quality of the *frappé* will be in excellent contrast to the leisurely and graceful *fondu*, not only rhythmically, but in the transition from relaxed state to muscular tautness. When sufficient technique has been acquired the *frappé* should be practised on the *demi-pointe*. This calls for a high degree of concentration and balance which can only be acquired over a period of time. The *battement frappé* may be used in all directions.

Battements Fondus carrying Working Leg from Extension through First Position to Extension: Instead of bringing the working leg into *sur le cou de pied* in the transition from one extended position to another, the working leg may be lowered fully stretched to the first position and carried out again. For instance, from *battement fondu* front, the working leg may be lowered through first position and lifted again to extension back; or from *fondu croisé* front it may be lowered through first position and carried to *effacé* back, etc. When the *battement fondu* rises to the *demi-pointe* the balance may be held on the *demi-pointe* while the working leg is carried to another position. This calls for a high degree of control in the back, and strong supporting leg; but regular practice of this movement provides an assured balance. It is also pleasing and very strengthening for the instep to lower the supporting heel smoothly as the working leg passes through the first position, rising again to *demi-pointe* as the working leg is lifted to another extension.

Battements Fondus Doubles: After the *fondu* with rise to *demi-pointe* is made, the supporting leg executes another *fondu* while the working leg is held in extension. With the completion of the second *fondu* the extended leg may be returned to *sur le cou de pied* or carried to another position *en l'air*. For example: *battement fondu* front; repeat *fondu* retaining working leg in extension; with rise from *fondu* carry extended leg to *à la seconde*. Or, *battement fondu* front; repeat *fondu* retaining working leg in extension; with rise from *fondu* carry extended to the *arabesque* position.

Battements Fondus en Revers: In which the working leg is lifted with *petit développé* movement to extension as the supporting leg makes *fondu*; and with the rise from *fondu* the extended leg is returned to *sur le cou de pied*.

Battements Fondus in Double Time: After executing a *battement fondu* it is effective to sometimes follow it with a repeat (like an echo) of the same movement in double quick time; that is to the count of and 1.

EXAMPLES OF ENCHAÎNEMENTS INCORPORATING BATTEMENTS FONDUS.
Commencing with right leg *sur le cou de pied.*

(*a*) 2 *battements frappés* side. Counts and 1, and 2,
Tombé, coupé. Counts and 3, and 4,
Battement fondu effacé front. Counts and 1, and 2,
Battement fondu effacé back. Counts and 3, and 4,
Pas de bourrée under. Counts and 1, and 2,
Pas de bourrée under. Counts and 3, and 4,
Repeat on other side.

(*b*) *Battement fondu à la seconde*. Counts and 1, and 2,
Plié relevé with *fouetté* to *arabesque*. Counts and 3, and 4,
Plié, pas de bourrée under. Counts and 1, and 2,
Pas de bourrée en tournant en dehors. Counts and 3, and 4,
Repeat on other side.

(*c*) *Battement fondu* front. Counts and 1 and 2,
Fondu and rise carrying extended leg to *à la seconde*. Counts and 3, and 4,
2 *Battements frappés* side. Counts and 1, and 2,
Plié, pas de bourrée under. Counts and 3, and 4,
Battement fondu back. Counts and 1, and 2.
Fondu and rise carrying extended leg to *à la seconde*. Counts and 3, and 4,
Plié, soutenu en tournant en dedans. Counts and 1, and 2,
1 *petit changement de pieds*. Counts and 3.

Front *en croisé*

Front *en effacé*

en arabesque en croisé

QUEEN OF THE VINTAGE: Albrecht (Miro Zolan, right) presents Giselle (Anne Heaton) with the staff of honour which signifies that she is the Queen of the Vintage. A moment from the first act of the new production of Giselle *given by the Royal Ballet from Sadler's Wells Theatre.*

GISELLE

The first production of the Coralli-Adam classic given by the Royal Ballet from Sadler's Wells Theatre was reproduced by Dame Ninette de Valois last year. Although this production has been seen in London when the company played at the Streatham Hill Theatre last autumn, the season at Sadler's Wells, which opens on July 1, will be the first time the production (designed by Peter Rice) has been seen in central London.

Photographed by HOUSTON ROGERS

FLOWER TEST (right): Heaton and Zolan in the scene from Act I when Giselle tests Albrecht's fidelity by plucking the petals of a daisy.

WILIS DANCE (below): The corps de ballet *in the ensemble at the beginning of Act II before they call up the spirit of Giselle from her grave.*

DIFFERENT CAST: Giselle (Sara Neil) and Albrecht (Alexander Bennett) in a moment towards the end of the second act after the exhausted Albrecht has been saved, by the dawn breaking, from being forced to dance to death by the Wilis.

Bennett, it will be remembered, was a fine Albrecht when he was the principal male dancer of Ballet Rambert.

BALLET TO A SYMPHONY: A group from the final movement of Massine's Rouge et Noir, *danced to Shostakovitch's First Symphony, with décor by Matisse. First performed in Monte Carlo in 1939, this was the fifth of Massine's "choreographic symphonies."*

NEW RECORDS
Reviewed by DAVID HUNT

Diaghilev said no

Prokofiev: *Scythian Suite.* Shostakovitch: Symphony No. 1 in F. Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française (Igor Markevitch). Columbia 33CX1440. 12in. 41*s.* 8½d.

AN interesting coupling of the first major orchestral works of both composers—the four-movement suite which Prokofiev drew from music originally intended for a large-scale spectacular ballet, *Ala and Lolli*, and Shostakovitch's First Symphony, written in 1925 when he was only 19, later choreographed by Massine as *Rouge et Noir*.

The *Scythian Suite* was the result of Prokofiev's first visit to London in 1914, when he saw performances of the Diaghilev Ballet at Drury Lane. Through a friend he arranged a meeting with Diaghilev who, after hearing him play his Second Piano Concerto, immediately commissioned him to write a ballet, suggesting a Russian fairytale or prehistoric theme as a suitable subject.

Prokofiev chose a legend of the ancient Scythians, the nomadic race who inhabited the southern Russian steppes from the eighth to the second centuries B.C. Diaghilev rejected the idea when the young composer brought him his sketches the following year, on the grounds that both subject and music bore too great a resemblance to *Le Sacre du Printemps*.

The truth of this is clear enough from the suite; but despite its obvious Stravinskian influence, the music has a barbaric splendour all its own and would seem to have greater theatrical possibilities than the self-sufficient and practically undanceable *Le Sacre*. Markevitch secures a thrilling performance that makes one regret all the more that Prokofiev had not finished the ballet by the time Diaghilev put an end to the project.

The Shostakovitch also receives dynamic and keenly-disciplined treatment, although the conductor does not seem entirely in sympathy with the work's vein of romantic introspection. The reproduction is outstandingly brilliant on both sides.

Transatlantic Boutique

Rossini-Respighi: *La Boutique Fantasque.* Dukas: *The Sorcerer's Apprentice.* Ibert: *Divertissement.* Boston Pops Orchestra (Arthur Fiedler). RCA RD27008. 12in. 37*s.* 6½*d.*

WHEREAS Ansermet's virtually complete recording of *La Boutique Fantasque* took up the whole of a 12-inch disc, this more heavily abridged version has been accommodated on a single side, leaving room on the reverse for *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* and Ibert's *Divertissement*. The performances are enjoyable, if in no way distinguished. The Boston Pops Orchestra plays throughout with its customary exuberance and lively attack, a certain want of subtlety and refinement mattering most in the *Divertissement*, the witty vulgarity of which is coarsened into a cruder kind of slapstick.

The *Boutique* selection includes all the actual dances except for the *Valse Lente*, but omits most of the connecting mime passages; although Fiedler nevertheless gives the whole of the *vivo* introduction to the *Mazurka*, abbreviated on the Ansermet version.

Reproduction on both sides is above average, but in the case of the *Boutique* is no match for the colourful brilliance of the Decca version (LXT2555), which remains one of the most delightful ballet records ever made, and sounds even more impressive on recent pressings than when it originally appeared over six years ago.

French Romanticism

Chausson: *Poème.* Saint-Saëns: *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso.* Berlioz: *Romeo and Juliet—Romeo's Reverie and Fête at the Capulets: Love Scene.* David Oistrakh (violin), Boston Symphony Orchestra (Charles Munch). HMV ALP1460. 12in. 41*s.* 8½*d.*

ON no other recording at present available of the haunting *Poème*—the music for Tudor's *Le Jardin aux Lilas*—is Chausson's sweet sadness so evocatively distilled as on this new version. The famous Soviet violinist David Oistrakh gives an intensely poignant account of the solo part, while Munch, who evidently shares Oistrakh's fervent response to the work, secures worthy orchestral support. Saint-Saëns's innocuous *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* receives equally flawless performance and makes a pleasant enough fill-up to the side.

The two excerpts from Berlioz's *Romeo and Juliet* on the reverse have been taken from Munch's complete recording of this great "Dramatic Symphony," which was one of the corner-stones of the Romantic movement. An attempted staging in the courtyard of the Louvre a year or so ago, in which several leading choreographers collaborated, was judged an honourable and interesting failure. Anyone unfamiliar with this magnificent music who buys the record for the sake of the Chausson can be sure of an exciting experience.

What YOU Think

Readers are invited to write to the Editor giving their views and posing any ballet problems.

Patriotism is not enough

SIR: In asking us to "wipe the steam of exuberance from our spectacles" in connection with the Bolshoi Theatre season in London, it is a pity that Mr. Brian Doughty, in his letter published in the June number, should immediately err on the side of this same exuberance.

No serious critic or viewer of ballet will now deny the distinction and achievements of English male dancers, but I do not think he will be able to pair anyone yet against the greatest of them all in the Bolshoi, Nikolai Fadeyechev and Gleb Yevdokimov.

Still on the subject of male dancing, I do not think we can any more claim that our soloists are supported by men (*not* "boys") of the calibre of Levashev, Trushkin, Sekh, Vassilev, Volodin, and many others, Kramarevsky, Pereguda, Kamaletdinov in the *corps*. That is still to come.

In the ballroom scene in *Swan Lake*, the Bolshoi gave us the brilliance, animation and elegance of a true court ball, which far from detracting from the central action supplied it with the appropriate setting and only enhanced its dramatic and fairy-tale effect.

A different, more total approach to the dramatic potential of every ballet, involving as one of its means of expression a more "realistic" type of décor and costumes, almost operatic in their lavishness, is no justification for a thoughtless and unsupported accusation of "Russian tinsel." Finally, the assertion, however heart-warming in its patriotism, that "we are the most virile and versatile company in the world" is another uncritical and exuberant manifestation, though it is certainly to the great credit of our distinguished Royal Ballet that it is "developing all the time," and therein lies its strength and promise. After all, the Bolshoi have been developing for 250 years and still consider it necessary to do so.

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They owe it to the RAD

SIR: The "three years of study" at the Royal Ballet School mentioned in the biography of Basil Thompson in your June issue was paid for by the Royal Academy of Dancing through the Leverhulme Trust. It was a full-time scholarship covering maintenance, tuition and dance training. The Royal Academy carried full responsibility for the boy's welfare.

Incidentally, Robert Lunnon, mentioned on the same page, was also a Leverhulme scholar and received the same benefits. Many young dancers now coming to the front owe their first opportunity to Royal Academy scholarships—Rowena Jackson, Elaine Fifield, Alexander Grant, and so on.

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Dame Ninette de Valois on *The English Ballet*

continued from page five

Ballet Company; they should be fostered if only to develop the special characteristics of the native dancer; such works are a sure means of expressing a country's national form of musicality.

The English dancer has shown himself to possess neatness, speed and precision in his technical feats. In his more expressive moments we are aware that he has a marked lyrical quality; in his dramatisation of a scene is shown a strong sense of detailed characterisation. I would say that, in performance, he unconsciously responds to his own folk dance, and a closer contact with this source would help to develop and stabilise these qualities.

We await a further generation of English dancers emerging from their own newly founded tradition; it is inevitable that this future generation of artists will bring forth some young choreographers bent on a more distinctly national form of self-expression.

Since the opening of the Royal Covent Garden Opera House in 1946, it has been the task of the Royal Ballet to establish a national ballet on the grand scale in our country, and we have, very naturally, modelled much of our effort on all the work that has preceded our existence in the form of other national ballets. I have said, though, that our own future style is much in evidence; our task in the immediate future is to develop what is there and bend it to our will.

Creatively speaking, in the theatre the English school has followed the modern conception of ballet (again a heritage of Diaghilev) in the form of emphasis on the completely self-contained one-act ballet.

This form, in its purest conception, was born about forty years ago; at that time it was welcomed as an effort to re-establish the greater principles of choreography, including that of its relationship to the better forms of music; the timely birth of this new order spelt the death knell to the numerous elongated, decadent and musically insignificant ballets of the late 19th century. We are today left only with the few surviving masterpieces of that time.

My recent visit to Moscow showed me that, although we needed a complete understanding of the approach to the three-act work, Russia was much in need of the reverse—the one-act ballet of Western Europe. During my stay in Moscow, the Russians expressed to me their wish that we should bring over to Russia many of our one-act ballets.

In England, I feel very strongly that we need the experiment in creative production of the more spacious, leisured approach; we need contact with that forgotten part of the theatre in modern ballet—the part that I can only describe as theatre-sense; it lies at the core of these great traditional three-act ballets. The structure of the scenario alone is of immense importance, for never does it appear to be an obscure peg used to hang movement on; it becomes, instead, a *raison d'être* for movement itself, a return to the significance of drama in the theatre.

In Russia today, though, through no experimental developments and over-emphasis of what we lack, there is evidence of the disintegration of true choreography; there were many examples to be seen of choreography as a mere serving-maid of the narrative, reducing, in many cases, the dance scenes to a series of banal dance clichés. Russia appears to need the taut, relentless demand of pure, undiluted choreography: the form of choreography that becomes a pure abstraction in its demand for a complete dedication of movement for movement's sake. Thus we both (England and Russia) have much to learn if we submit to a disciplined temporary dedication to that theatre form that is weakest in our own respective creative work.

Only in *The Prince of the Pagodas* have we in England, so far, attempted an experiment in the full length medium of ballet, where all may be said to have been completely started from scratch. Neither the scenario, the music, nor the choreography was in existence two years ago.

For us to have achieved complete unity for the first time, would have been too much to ask of everyone concerned. What did emerge from this experiment were the undoubted possibilities that it held for us all: there are many passages in this ballet that do achieve complete unity of choreography, music and scenario. Where there were mistakes in this complex unity—many very valuable lessons were learned. The work was produced at La Scala, Milan, early this month with much success; it will be given its first American performance by the Royal Ballet at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, in the autumn. A considerable portion of it will have been revised by then.

I have touched in general on our position in the world today as a recognised National Ballet. Twenty-five years of life is very young in comparison with the great national companies of long standing. Ballet criticism in this country is, of course, even younger. A National Ballet has to be created before the advent of the ballet critics; it cannot be considered possible to achieve really mature ballet criticism for yet another fifteen years. There is little of importance, in the constructional sense, coming as yet from ballet criticism in England. We would be wanting, however, in generosity and understanding if we expected things to be otherwise. These critics of ours have no national heritage to guide them and very little space allotted to them in the Press. Nevertheless, the thankless responsibility of assuming the burden of this task is something that must be attempted, otherwise no real progress will ever be made. Some of these critics, of course, regard attack as the best means of defence. On thinking it over—why not? There are less vital ways of standing up to the painful business of acquiring knowledge.

Dance and Dancers . . . . AT HOME

THE ROYAL BALLET AT COVENT GARDEN

Linden and Nerina

ANYA LINDEN'S official press début in Ashton's *Sylvia* confirmed the earlier favourable impression she had made in the rôle. She danced with complete ease and an air of apparent enjoyment. The last act *pas de deux* was once again the highlight of her performance. In the second act, her scene with Orion was dramatically more convincing than before, and her Amazon maid of the first act had an almost suffragette fervour. Yet what pulled her performance down from the pedestal upon which her many gifts might have placed it, was her extraordinary lack of response to the music.

This is an aspect of dancing which one hesitates to stress, for fear of undermining a dancer's confidence, but as Linden progresses up the company—and she is fairly certainly the next in line for promotion to ballerina ranking—her hesitancy in timing, to put the problem at its lowest level, becomes more and more important. The truly musical dancer, like Fonteyn, Somes or Shaw, will always be a rarity, and these are able to allow themselves considerable rhythmic latitude while still remaining in time with the music. With Fonteyn, retarding and accelerating within the musical phrases has become a vital part of her artistry, but most dancers are content, and rightly so, with keeping in time with the music quite straightforwardly. Linden's difficulties in this are by no means unique, or even unusual, and with care can easily be overcome. Watching her in this and the *Ballet Imperial pas de trois*, I got the impression that she was jumping rather than landing on the beat (from observation I would say that it hardly matters when a dancer *starts* to jump as long as he lands in time with the music) and that when a movement ended on a beat she was failing to anticipate this by initiating her movement slightly in advance of the phrase. Her counting also sometimes seems irregular; I could not help noticing that in the first act of *Sylvia* she appeared to finish an *enchaînement* with music in hand. Perhaps I am wrong, but it does appear to me that Linden at this stage needs a little help from her teachers (who must, of course, be her only true critics) in overcoming this apparent hurdle between herself and the top.

At this performance she was well partnered by David Blair as Aminta, and Bryan Ashbridge as Orion. Rosemary Lindsay made her début as Diana, without quite enough militancy. Earlier performances of *Sylvia* had shown, as newcomers to the rôles, Douglas Stuart as a lively Goat, although the costume did not flatter him; Christopher Newton as a confident Phoebus; and Ronald Hynd, snootily elegant as Apollo.

The recent revival of *Ballet Imperial* proved more than welcome, even if it provided an unpleasant reminder that we still have only one Balanchine ballet in the national repertory. The ballet was rehearsed by John Hart, company ballet-master, and came up as fresh as the freshest daisy. I would say that in all the seven years it has been in the repertory it has never been danced so well as this season. The *corps de ballet* youngsters gave it a bite and snap that would be a credit to New York City Ballet, and added a certain "imperial" quality that is their very own. At this rate we can look forward to a revival of *Scènes de Ballet* that will really do that work the justice that has hitherto been denied it.

The ballerina rôle was entrusted for the first time to Nadia Nerina who, after an initial awkwardness at the beginning of the first piano cadenza, blazed away splendidly. At times she missed the air of divine right which the ballerina should possess in this, and the romantic undertones of the *andante* could have been more sweetly emphasised, but wherever the music was the thickest she was in there pitching with astonishing success. She tossed off the *doubles sauts de basque* in the last movement with ravishing nonchalance and flashed her way through the *finale* like a Horowitz.

Philip Chatfield partnered well, sometimes throwing Nerina up like a playful child, but when not partnering he looked a little depressed, particularly by his variation. The second movement, which differs, I believe, from the American original, depends very heavily on the *premier danseur*. No one but Somes has yet known quite how to leave the empty stage. Chatfield, for instance, gave it quite the wrong

nuance by raising one of his arms on his exit, a gesture far too theatrical for grief.

The *pas de trois* of Rosemary Lindsay, Desmond Doyle and Ronald Hynd went well, with the dancers bouncing nicely. Lindsay is more gracious than charming, more cheerful than gay, both marginal differences of interpretation which detract from the character. Her dancing could have been cleaner; her *pirouettes* were especially untidy.

The green *coryphées*, Maryon Lane and Annette Page, ran in and through the patterns with just the right frisky self-assurance.

Cast changes

THE *Prince of the Pagodas* has been shortened, but not appreciably. A few recent performances have been conducted by Kenneth Alwyn, who has put in some good work during the season. It is to be hoped that when the new Musical Director, Hugo Rignold, arrives, Alwyn will still be allowed to conduct certain performances. He has the makings of an admirable ballet conductor.

Cast changes have included a most impressive solo début by David Drew, dancing the Ashbridge part in the *pas de six*. He showed a fine presence, good jump, and a strong, masculine *port de bras*. I also liked John Sale as one of the Fishes, which lived up to the promise of his *Swan Lake pas de six* last season. Merle Park (if they don't make her a soloist soon we will have to invent a title for her, like *prima corps de ballerina assoluta*) was not well suited to Linden's rôle of the Moon.

Petrushka has developed into what Wardour Street would call a box-office sensation. In nearly every respect performances have shown a gradual but encouraging improvement.

Both Nadia Nerina and Elaine Fifield have appeared as the Ballerina. Nerina was very effective in a clockwork, mechanical way—like Mr. Eliot's typist in *The Waste Land*: "She smoothes her hair with automatic hand." Fifield, wearing a terrible make-up, offered promise of more pneumatic bliss. There was an undercurrent of sex beneath the surface of this baby doll. Fifield's performance was reviewed last month.

Ashton has improved his Showman. His final retreat, fleeing like Orestes from the Eumenides, is given a fine tragic formality, but elsewhere he still dissolves into the general scene. Franklin White, the other Showman, was considerably more dominating and menacing. The sinister *bonhomie* of his off-duty moments had a well-conceived touch of the shadily sinister, and the vulgar, flourishing tone he adopted in introducing his puppets, reminded us that the Showman is sometimes called the Charlatan. Changes of slightly lesser importance have brought in Merle Park and Doreen Wells as the Street Dancers, and David Drew as a most exuberant Chief Coachman.

It was good to see Pirmin Trecu back dancing after his unfortunate accident at the beginning of the season. For the first time since his Theatre Ballet days he has appeared in *Les Sylphides*. Partnering Fifield (they make a good couple) he danced with a carefree virility. This approach to *Les Sylphides*, rare in England where we prefer our poets pasty-faced and suffering, while making the romanticism more Byronic than Chopinesque does not detract from the famous "atmosphere," and often seems more appropriate to Fokine's choreography. The male dancer's appearance in the *finale* calls for a swashbuckling manner which can easily seem inconsistent if the mazurka has been danced in a palely austere fashion.

Cranko and Macmillan revivals

WHETHER they were appointments, or whether they were public acknowledgments of existing arrangements, from the beginning of April the Covent Garden programmes have listed John Cranko and Kenneth MacMillan as "Choreographers to the Royal Ballet." The announcement was mildly celebrated by the revivals of Cranko's *The Shadow* and MacMillan's *Noctambules*.

Like all the pure dance ballets this season *The Shadow* was beautifully performed. One notices that John Hart, as Ballet Master, now also has his name "writ large" on the programmes, and if this is intended as a tribute to the way the *corps de ballet* is dancing at present it could hardly be more justified. Beriosova, Chatfield, Ashbridge, Lindsay, Shaw, Doyle and Hynd were all as expert as ever, yet it was the improvement in the *corps de ballet* that caught the eye. The ballet itself, with its simple but effective symbolism, has settled down to be a useful repertory piece.

MacMillan's *Noctambules* is in many vital respects a better ballet than *The Shadow*, but I suspect it will not have the same staying power. Its flaw is not so much the story itself, but the way in which it is developed. It fails to involve the audience, so that unlike *Petrushka*, a work with which it has much in common, we cannot recognise its emotions as part of common experience.

Apart from the original cast the ballet has also been given with Annette Page as the Faded Beauty, Doreen Wells as the Hypnotist's Assistant, and Pirmin Trecu as the Soldier. They sustained MacMillan's atmosphere of evil beauty and waxen decadence. Page missed the pathos of Nerina or the heartbreak of Farron as the Faded Beauty, chiefly because her fading was too slight. Doreen Wells's perky touch of humanity gave a wistful appeal to the Assistant, while Trecu's Soldier, still not as well danced as Shaw's, had a military rakishness of its own.

Immediately before the Royal Ballet flew to its date in glorious colour and two dimensions with America's millions, it showed us a new partnership in *Swan Lake*—Nadia Nerina and David Blair. They danced splendidly apart and not quite so well together, but this will presumably come. The Black Swan *pas de deux*, greeted by the tea-saturated *matinée* audience with genteel enthusiasm, was terrific. And I particularly liked a little boy in the audience who kept querulously enquiring in a clear treble: "What's happening, Mummy?" Well may he ask.

Clive Barnes

Shaw as Petrushka

THE second cast *Petrushka* on May 10—Brian Shaw in the title rôle, Fifield as the Ballerina and Gary Burne as the Blackamoor—proved to be interesting.

Shaw was nearer to one's original idea of Petrushka than was Grant, which does not mean that Grant's was not equally effective in its own rather extrovert way. Shaw made Petrushka into a pathetic character which wrung the heart and caused, if such a thing were possible, a hardened old critic to brush aside a small tear at the end. I think that it is in the death scene where Grant fails; Shaw managed to wring the full pathos out of it. He was particularly good in the cell scene and he danced the whole rôle with a great sensitivity and understanding of Stravinsky's score. The Royal Ballet are lucky to have two such fine artists who can undertake this exacting rôle, two artists who give such different performances, each of which stands up on its own sawdust feet.

Oddly enough, Fifield was not as good in the Ballerina rôle as she was a few weeks previous to this when she had to take the rôle over without much rehearsal, in the performance reviewed in full last month. It makes me think that perhaps she is a more instinctive artist than I had imagined and that too much rehearsal and constant schooling cause her performance to become forced—certainly that was the impression that this particular performance left me with.

The sensual rôle of the Blackamoor is at the moment outside the range of the Royal Ballet's dancers. Although Gary Burne went through all the movements required of him, I did not feel that he had given the part's innumerable complexities any deep thought. For instance, his attitude towards the coconut in the third scene is pretty cursory. Never for a second did I feel that this inanimate husk was his god, and the centre of the world shaped in his diminutive brain. His attitude to it was that it was nothing more than—a coconut. After all, Benois and Fokine did not introduce this object merely for laughs. There was a most definite reason for it all, and in this coconut lies the secret of the Blackamoor's whole character.

In all the performances I have seen so far of the Royal Ballet's *Petrushka*, nobody has managed to instil any wit or mischievous naughtiness into the Lanner *pas de deux* in the Blackamoor's cell. This surely is the most biting send-up of a classical *pas de deux* in any ballet of this century, far more so than anything that Antony Tudor ever achieved in his *Gala Performance*—as yet, in this production it has amounted to nothing at all.

The programme opened with the enlarged *Les Patineurs* and with Rowena Jackson making a most welcome twirling come-back after her operation. It finished with Nerina in the title rôle in *The Firebird*. Nerina danced the rôle possibly better than I have ever seen it danced since the days of Diaghilev and it amounted to nothing more than a display of dancing, of which frankly there is very little when we get down to it. Not a tremor of fear crossed her face as the Prince captured her, not an ounce of grandeur was noticeable when she forced the hosts of Kostchei to dance in an infernal round. The ballets of Fokine amount to little unless they are interpreted with the greatest artistry and this was only apparent, on this occasion, in Michael Somes's excellent portrayal of Prince Ivan.

Markova's return

ONE of the happiest tasks of the critic is to be able to acclaim with honesty and deep sincerity a great artist in a great rôle. On May 30, Alicia Markova returned as guest ballerina to the company she was largely responsible for bringing to its present eminence. Her choice for this return was *Giselle*. It might be thought that there is nothing further to be said of Markova's performance in this ballet—how wrong! In the same way that she alters and improves her interpretation all the time, so can we learn from her.

The most noticeable feature of the beginning of her first act was the youthful joyousness with which she now invests the early scenes. I had the feeling that she was madly in love with Albrecht and that it was the greatest thing that had ever happened in her life. A feeling of intense happiness surges across the footlights, even the fact that two peasants—excellently given by Maryon Lane and Pirmin Trecu—are going to dance, causes her to clap her hands with delight.

When her world breaks around her, the utter blankness of her features and the lifelessness which steals over her is so unbearable to watch that one wonders why the surrounding villagers should appear so unmoved. Cannot somebody instil into the Royal Ballet's *corps* that they *must* react to situations on the stage. They all need a good dose of the Stanislavsky method. We cannot yet dare to send such a completely lifeless company to Moscow. When an audience is obviously far more moved by Markova's performance than the company who are paid to surround her, then something is very wrong indeed.

It used to be said that in this ballet Markova

SWAN SONG: John Field (right) talking to the full company of the Royal Ballet from Sadler's Wells Theatre before they embarked on their recent trans-European tour. This may well be the last picture to be taken of the company in the rehearsal room at Sadler's Wells Theatre. By the autumn this company will have merged with the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden and Sadler's Wells will have given up supporting a ballet company.

Photo: Houston Rogers

was better in the second act than in the final. Today I think that her first act is equally remarkable. If there is any fault to find I think that the opening moments are underdanced. Admittedly this works the act up gradually and is quite the reverse approach to that of Fonteyn, who dances all-out in these opening moments and tends to fall short at the end. But if this subduing of technique fools those who do not know her into thinking that Markova is not a strong technician, then they soon discover how wrong they are when she dances her first-act variation. Her incredible lightness, the perfection of her *pirouettes* and the speed of her *diagonale* have only been equalled, to my knowledge, by Olga Spessivtzeva. What is more, Markova invests this whole variation with an all-embracing joy of dancing for her friends and her beloved Albrecht. The six friends who have to dance immediately afterwards, all of whom were probably born after Markova had become an established star, look old and extremely lumpish.

With the years, her second act has gained something also. In the old days, I used to feel that she was apt to divide the whole ballet into two parts. Now there is a general merging and something of the spirit of the happy Giselle of the first act, before the tragedy of deception overtook her, living on in her supernatural self. This surely is the right interpretation, because Giselle is such a novice Wili that she cannot have shed all her earthly feelings so quickly: a ghost of gaiety must still linger there. Her every moment on the stage in this act was a joy to watch and a wonderful example of the real meaning of style. It is a small point but I do wish that the Royal Ballet ballerinas would follow Markova's example of not finishing the second act variation in the middle of the stage. To carry the *diagonale*, as she does, on into the wings with a beautiful *arabesque* gives far greater continuity.

David Blair, as Albrecht, partnered splendidly throughout. He still needs to work on his interpretation and I felt that in the first act he saw Albrecht as somebody resembling his Signor Midas in Cranko's *The Lady and the Fool*, with an imaginary watch and chain twirling in his hand. He was not quite the Romantic lover nor yet the strutting bounder that Albrecht really is—he fell somewhere between these two extremes without creating a wholely plausible character. But Blair has embarked on the other classical rôles which he now gives with such natural aplomb in much the same way; so I have no fear that his Albrecht will not develop with the same gradual and sure understanding.

Leslie Edwards made a sympathetic and intelligently conceived Hilarion and Rosemary Lindsay gave the best performance of Myrtha I have ever seen her do. I did not like the new final moment of the ballet when Albrecht, having disposed of Giselle in an unnaturally lit hole in the ground, walks forward in a bemused way which was presumably intended to convey to the audience that maybe the whole thing was just a fantasy that had never happened. The Bolshoi can get away with this—almost—but we cannot. Dolin's dramatic fall, in his version, makes far better theatre.

Peter Williams

BALLET RAMBERT

Giselle in Hastings

AFTER witnessing in the past year a number of ballerinas as Giselle who have little for self-congratulation other than the dreadful efficiency of their dancing, a writer may well be struck by the rather obvious fact that it is no easy task to be thoroughly convincing in the rôle. Yet, against all the odds, the newest of the Giselles in the Ballet Rambert's version, Patricia Dyer, succeeds in being so.

Her performance, which cannot be dismissed as an experimental flight, must be regarded as another example of the patience, the long-range planning, and almost slick sleight of hand brilliance by which Madame Rambert is able to earmark dancers for the rôles that really suit them.

Although comparatively inexperienced in the part, Dyer's interpretation is a carefully thought out one; a touching portrait which is fresh, very life-loving in Act I, and never artificial or blasé. It is difficult to judge her dancing on a stage as cramped as that at Hastings. But while she is a musically sensitive dancer with a beautiful *port de bras*, I think it can fairly be said that her technical ability lags a little behind her very refined powers of expression.

To Gillian Martlew, who has further expanded her interpretation of Myrtha into a beautiful but more malevolent personality, the rôle is considered as something more than an opportunity to display her *grands jetés*, *sauts de basque*, and line—all of which, incidentally, are very good. Norman Dixon, who has a fine sense of style and impeccable stage manners, makes a good Albrecht. His dancing is much improved, although his turns are still erratic.

The cast of Tudor's lively parody *Gala Performance* has been changed, with Patricia Ashworth and Ian Metsis as the new and remarkably successful Moscow dancers. These dancers are also very well matched in the *Giselle peasant pas de deux*.

When you examine the Ballet Rambert, however, it is not, on the whole, the moments of technical display which make the most lasting impression. Its strength lies in the personalities, the complete assurance and acting ability of its principals. And the present form of the principals and the capacity house (at a matinée, too) may indicate that the company is in for a period of prosperity again. This is certainly not a company to be forgotten as soon as seen, and considering the talents now assembled, the forthcoming season at Sadler's Wells should be an unusually interesting one.

E. C. Mason

DANCE FILMS

Film of the Bolshoi Ballet directed by Paul Czinner for Harmony Films at the Festival Hall on May 3.

PAUL CZINNER'S eagerly-awaited film of the Bolshoi Ballet was given a gala late-night preview at the Festival Hall, in aid of the Royal College of Nursing. Technically, the film is a triumph of highly skilled and intelligent use of the medium, and marks a

tremendous advance on previous attempts to record ballet as a stage spectacle. The colour is magnificent and the clarity and brilliance of the reproduction achieves so extraordinarily potent an effect of atmosphere that for most of the time the illusion is complete of actually seeing the company again from a front stalls seat at the Davis Theatre, Croydon, or at Covent Garden.

To judge from his extremely sensitive camera-work, Czinner obviously knows and cares a great deal about ballet—there are none of those fussings and fidgetings and all the other usual irritations of filmed ballet, the dance being allowed to speak for itself. Close-ups are used rather sparingly and never destroy the line or continuity of a movement.

The first half consists of excerpts from the programme of divertissements given at Croydon, beginning with the Polonaise and Krakowiak from Glinka's *Ivan Susanin*. The richness of the costumes, the pattern and fine detail of Zacharov's choreography, come over splendidly, and there are some magnificent shots of the superb Zvyagina. Equally exciting are the *pas de deux*, *Spring Water*, danced with breath-taking exhilaration by Bogomolova and Vlassov, the Spanish Dance from *Swan Lake*, the electrifying Tartar Dance from *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*, Ulanova's *Dying Swan* (the only instance of the musical sound-track being not quite perfectly synchronised with the dancing), and finally, with Struchkova as a gloriously provocative Bacchante leading the revels, the controversial *Faust* ballet.

In *Giselle*, Czinner has concentrated—and wisely, I feel—on providing a record of Ulanova's incomparable performance, rather than on a wider-ranging view of the production as a whole. From a dramatic point of view this is easily the best film of the great ballerina we have seen, even if some of the close-ups do not succeed in maintaining the girlish appearance Ulanova achieved from a greater distance in the theatre. Seen at such close range, however, the Mad Scene is, if anything, even more terrifyingly convincing, so moving in fact that it seems incredible that the two-dimensional screen can convey such a power of personality and intensity of emotion.

As shown on this occasion, the film suffered a great number of cuts, most notably, in the first act, Giselle's Minkus variation and the "Peasant" *pas de deux*; in the second, Myrthe's solos, Giselle's first entrance, her materialisation to Albrecht and, amazingly, the main *pas de deux*.

It is quite possible, however, that this abbreviation was necessitated by the requirements of this particular showing, in order not to exceed a certain limited playing time. The fact that the cast list at the beginning promises a performance of the "Peasant" *pas de deux* encourages me to hope that this was the case. Another inaccuracy in the credits was that Samokhvalova was wrongly named, instead of Karelskaya, as dancing the Queen of the Wilis.

Nevertheless, even with these cuts the film provides a worthy record of Ulanova's wonderful performance and it is greatly to be hoped that it will be given a general screening in the very near future. I know that I for one will want to see it at least a dozen times.

David Hunt

A programme presented by the Pushkin Club, London, on May 9 and 11.

INTRODUCED by Marie Rambert, this programme of dance films allowed fascinating if tantalising glimpses of some of the greatest Russian ballerinas of this century.

When watching the Douglas Fairbanks Pavlova films, which were lent by the British Film Institute, it is essential of course to remember that these were only tests which Pavlova was unaware would ever be shown to the public. They are, at the same time, proof of her genius and a warning to every dancer always to regard the lens of the movie camera, no matter how informal the occasion, as the eye of posterity.

The excerpts from the first act of the Camargo Society's production of *Giselle* brought Spessivtzeva's superbly classical dancing in the title rôle, as well as fleeting impressions of Dolin's Albrecht of a quarter of a century ago and of Ninette de Valois as a considerably older and more tottery Berthe than we are used to seeing nowadays. It is interesting to note that, in the Mad Scene, Berthe attempts to make Giselle enter the cottage, as in the Bolshoi production.

FLAMENCO IN CHELSEA: Trader Faulkner and Cora Martell in one of the flamenco dances they recently gave at the Royal Court Theatre Club in Sloane Square, London, with great success. Faulkner is also an actor, appearing at present in The Waltz of the Toreadors, *and will be the subject of an article next month.*

Ulanova's wondrously beautiful performance with Sergeyev of the second-act *pas de deux* from *Swan Lake* was followed by an amateur film of her *Dying Swan*, taken at Croydon at the same time as Paul Czinner's version.

Finally, there were shots of the youthful Toumanova practising and as Aurora in a pre-war performance by the de Basil company of *Aurora's Wedding*. Taken from the wings, this last film provides a maddeningly fragmentary but adequate record of Danilova's dancing of the "Finger" variation, of Riabouchinska and Roland Guerard in the Blue Bird *pas de deux*, and of Woizikovsky's Bolshoi-like resilience as the chief Ivan. There was also a snippet of film, taken at a different performance, of Baronova as Aurora which, for all its limitations, nevertheless showed enough to confirm one's golden memories of this wonderful ballerina and to make one bitterly regret once again her early retirement.

David Hunt

DANCE LECTURES

A lecture given by Belinda Quirey, with a recital of dances. Presented by the British Dance Notation Society on May 12.

Dancers
BELINDA QUIREY, WILLIAM MILLIGAN, LUDMILA MLADA, WENDY HILTON, CAROL JONES, THELMA FOALE, BETTY KAVANAGH, GAY CLARK, LESLIE PLACKETT and JOSEPHINE QUINN.

BELINDA QUIREY is the chairman of the Historical Branch of the ISTD, and the amount of detailed information she compressed into this comparatively short, but extremely witty, lecture was indeed remarkable. Taking a few characteristic dances from different periods, she used these chronologically to show the process of continuity in dance—a dance of one period being transformed into a similar or entirely different dance in the next period with its pattern changed or steps added.

But she terms herself an historian, not an antiquarian. Consequently her material covers a wider field than that usually witnessed in demonstrations of this type, where the lecturer leaves off after exploring the tangled wildernesses of pre-19th century dance. Belinda Quirey's material stops with the present day—in this case with Ludmila Mlada illustrating for her, with great professional skill, contemporary modern dance.

Today there are a number of problems associated with the reproduction of historical dances. A most aggravating one is the fact that they are so frequently performed by people who cannot dance at all. Moreover, Belinda Quirey says, in dancing we must look for different things in different ages, but we must know what to look for *and not look for too much*. She is fond of using musical analogies. Thus, she says, we must not expect to hear thrilling chords and great waltzes in Bach, simply because they are evident in Tchaikovsky's work.

But we cannot hope to understand very much about dancing earlier than the 19th century if it is approached with the outlook of today. We must continually bear in mind that the distinction between performing and watching does not apply before the end of the 18th century. All dancing was once a matter of mutual pleasure—domestic or social—you danced for pleasure and you were watched. There were, however, the professionals, the tumblers and grotesques, but they were thought of as tumblers, not as dancers. From the beginning of the last century we get a division between the two, since intensified so much that today there exists almost nothing in common between ballroom dancing and stage dancing.

Another difficulty is that we must not delude ourselves by accepting what we so often see given as historical dancing as representing the genuine article. This could be tantamount to considering Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* as authentically medieval as Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, or, again, believing that the pre-Raphaelite painters were genuinely pre-Raphael.

In connection with the fundamental ingredients of dance—the use of space and rhythm—the following demonstrations were given.

The body making a significant pattern in relation to itself was illustrated by a classical ballet *adage*. Bodies making a harmonious pattern in relation to their surrounding space was illustrated by the country dance, *Heart's Ease*, in which the couples start by facing each other, but perform steps which are not in themselves interesting. Visual rhythm, in which the body itself provides its own rhythm, was illustrated by an example of modern

oriental-*plastique* dancing, while aural rhythm was represented by an example of tap dancing.

Early dances presented included the Farandole, in which the pattern is the *raison d'ɛtre* of the dance and the line dances as a whole line. In the Estampie we saw an early example of rhythm and pattern combined, and with the Ballo of the Italian Renaissance, a more elaborate dance performed to varying rhythms. With the 17th century, the "turn out" appears, although before this it was naturally used whenever it was more simple to execute a step in this fashion.

To give special emphasis to the difference between the synthetic reproduction and genuine product, she supplied further demonstrations. These included an example of what she aptly termed the 19th-century "fancy dancing" or "bric-a-brac" school: a Gavotte *sur les pointes* performed in a manner she labelled "reminiscent of Madame Genée's *soubrette* style." Then followed an all-purpose cameo historical *pas de deux* in what she terms this time "the swoop and swoon" manner: a style taught in some of our drama schools, used for performance in costume plays, and prevalent in film studios. Any students, she declares, who are under the unfortunate illusion that these scandalous reproductions are genuine, may find it difficult to understand the cultural forces of the 18th century and Voltaire's enlightenment.

How did they dance at Versailles? This is a question which needs careful thought. Feuillet, however, must not be regarded as a little goldmine of dances for modern notators or present-day performances. While she has learned the steps herself from his notation, she has, she stresses, added a great deal more. Notation alone is not enough. One must, therefore, be careful not to reproduce period dances solely from their recorded steps, otherwise they may appear to be "dead," even though they can be claimed to be the authentic results of original research.

As an experiment she reproduced a Sarabande as taught by John Cranko to the RAD Production Club. The same Sarabande was then danced by Wendy Hilton as, she believed, Marie Sallé may have danced it: a reproduction based not only on her knowledge of this dance, but on written descriptions of Sallé's dancing and illustrations of her in contemporary publications.

All French court dancing was orientated directly forward toward the King, but the 19th century brought the diagonal approach which appears so much in ballet today. Among the examples of stage dancing which were given were the Romantic ballerina *bourrée*-ing in the woodland glades on the other side of the mysterious gaslit footlights; a dance in the "revived Greek" period style; and a demonstration of what the Victorian child probably learned at her dancing lesson.

Excellent as Belinda Quirey is as a lecturer, she is, she says, anxious to return to her fields of research and work solidly for another four or five years. One of the underlying reasons for her research is that she is anxious for the study of dance in this country to be placed on firm academic foundations. A good general history of period dance is badly needed. May one hope that the results of her research will eventually be published?

E. C. Mason

Dance and Dancers . . . ABROAD

FRANCE

THE WUPPERTAL BALLET

THE present awakening of interest in ballet in Germany is evidently not confined to principal centres such as Berlin, Munich, Wiesbaden and Frankfurt. Judging from the short season recently given at the Théâtre des Nations by a company from Wuppertal, this smaller German city is the scene of a similar retreat from the principles of Kurt Jooss and Mary Wigman.

One does not expect from a small company that has been in existence for only three years the standard of longer-established groups, and it would be unfair to compare it with the great international companies. Time and hard work will probably confirm the value of much that is for the moment rather tentative in the presentations.

The programme given on April 28, 29 and 30 showed a high regard for quality and originality in the choice of music, two of the scores being new to Paris. Choreographed by the company's ballet-master, Erich Walter, the three ballets were sharply contrasted.

The first, *Jacques Pudding*, was a ferocious harlequinade in a somewhat dated style with a score by Hans Werner Henze, who specialises in ballet music. The choreographer appeared in the main rôle, as a Pierrot bewildered and deceived by the traditional pantomime figures. He is surrounded by grotesque silhouettes, one of which turns into the young Harlequin, danced by Egbert Strolka.

Bartók's *Music for Strings, Celesta and Percussion* was treated in the manner of Balanchine. The *corps de ballet* are not yet sufficiently strong technically to sustain a work of this *genre*, or at least to justify the essay being shown abroad.

Finally, with *Pelléas et Mélisande* we were given the chance of hearing Arnold Schoenberg's interesting score, which owes much to Wagnerian influence. The use of a front gauze coupled with heavy green lighting made it difficult to make out the detail of the choreography, which seemed to be mostly confined to the three principal rôles; what the rest were doing was obscured in deep shadow. The music, though of great interest in itself, seemed scarcely suited to support classical dancing. Denise Laumer made a delicate Mélisande, Egon Pinnau a grave Pelléas, and Erich Walter a convincingly jealous Golaud.

The sets and costumes for the three ballets, by Günter Kappel and Heinrich Wendel, were in debatable taste. Walter's choreography is commendable, if not particularly original. On the whole, the programme could be called a worthwhile and sincere attempt, and the discipline of the performers left a favourable impression.

ROSARIO

MAY saw the return of Rosari to the capital, after an absence of more than six months in her homeland. Her season at the Théâtre de l'Etoile showed once again what a superb artist she is, with a reserve and distinction that sets her apart from other exponents of the Spanish dance. Her art, with its exquisite femininity and complete assurance, could be said to occupy a place between the more audacious and tentative style of Luisillo and Roberto Inglesias and the classicism of Pilar Lopez.

Her repertoire on this occasion contained nothing particularly striking, but everything was memorable for its innate taste and musicality. To an even greater extent than formerly, Rosario is herself the focal point and chief interest of the spectacle, being on stage for

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most the whole time. She particularly shone in Garcia Lorca's *Zorongo gitano*, the Dance of the Miller's Wife from Falla's *Le Tricorne*, and in the Rimsky-Korsakov *Capriccio Espagnol*. Juan Alba also distinguished himself with some excellent *zapateado* in *Martinete* and in the Farucca from *Le Tricorne*.

Marie-Françoise Christout

AMERICA

ROYAL BALLET RETURN

THE day after the coast-to-coast television broadcast of the Royal Ballet's *Cinderella*, regular subscribers on impresario Sol Hurok's mailing list received a complete brochure on the company's month-long engagement at the Metropolitan Opera House that commences on September 8. Announced are six productions new to America: Frederick Ashton's *Birthday Offering* and *La Péri*, John Cranko's *The Prince of the Pagodas*, Kenneth MacMillan's *Solitaire* and *Noctambules*, and the new production of *Petrushka*. The repertoire will also include *The Sleeping Beauty*, which will open and close the New York season, *Le Lac des Cygnes*, *Sylvia*, *Coppélia*, *The Firebird*, *Façade* and *Les Patineurs*. Orchestra seats and boxes will be $10.80 for the Gala Première and will be $6 and $7 on subsequent evenings with $5 the top price for the same locations on matinées.

IGLESIAS IN NEW YORK

ROBERTO IGLESIAS and his company of dancers, singers and musicians established themselves as an exciting new Spanish dance company in their recent début performance at Carnegie Hall. Iglesias is a vivid and fiery dancer with a great dramatic force and an exciting technique. Special mention must be made of the wonderful colours and designs of the costumes, and, although they were not seen to their best advantage in Carnegie Hall, the company made a profound effect on the capacity audience that ended by cheering and bravo-ing the dancers.

ALICIA MARKOVA IN AMERICA

WHEN Ted Shawn returned to the United States after his visits to Scotland, England, Copenhagen and Sweden, he announced that Alicia Markova was flying to America to make a special guest appearance at the Jacob's Pillow Silver Anniversary Dance Festival.

Markova, who comes to America immediately after her appearances at the dance festival in Nervi, will be performing two of her famous solos as well as appearing in *L'Après Midi d'un Faun* with Hugh Laing. It has also been announced that Alicia Markova will return to the Metropolitan Opera House in December to repeat her rôle as ballerina in the revival of Gluck's opera *Orfeo ed Euridice*.

NEW MUSICAL ON BROADWAY

FROM a dance point of view primarily, *Shinbone Alley*, the new musical starring Eartha Kitt and Eddie Bracken, has been one of the most rewarding of the season. Based on the Don Marquis fables of "Archy and Mehitabel," with Eartha Kitt in the rôle of a cat and Eddie Bracken playing a cockroach, this musical achieved its brightest moments in its dance numbers.

As many will remember, Miss Kitt began her professional life as a dancer in Katherine Dunham's company and in this production she dances insinuatingly and magnificently. However, it is Jacques d'Amboise and Allegra Kent, who are on leave from the New York City Ballet, who win nightly audience ovations in the *Vacant Lot Ballet*, staged by choreographer Rod Alexander. Allegra Kent, who created such a profound impression in Francisco Moncion's new work for the New York City Ballet earlier this season, was lyrically superb, moved beautifully and looked glorious. D'Amboise, who has matured greatly this past season, has some magnificent leaps and turns, his elevation is higher than ever, and he proved a superb partner. Judging by critical and audience acclaim, Allegra Kent and Jacques d'Amboise can have a Broadway career any time they want it.

Arthur Todd.

COVER STORIES

This month's front cover, by Mike Davis, is of Belinda Wright and Keith Beckett in Festival Ballet's new production of David Lichine's *Graduation Ball* which London will first see on the company's opening night at the Festival Hall on July 9.

BELINDA WRIGHT was born in Southport, Lancashire, and had her first dancing lessons there. At the age of 16 she joined Ballet Rambert and by the time the company went for its long Australian tour in 1947, she was dancing principal rôles. Returning to Europe two years later, she joined Roland Petit's Ballets de Paris and with that company went twice to America.

Returning to England in 1951, she joined Festival Ballet as a principal dancer and where, apart from a short period with the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas, she has remained ever since.

Wright has created a number of important rôles with Festival Ballet, notably the title rôle in Michael Charnley's *Alice in Wonderland*. Early in 1956 she created a rôle in *Les Deux Errants*, a notable first ballet by her husband, Wolfgang Brunner. Her outstanding achievement to date has been her Swanilda in Harald Lander's production of the Danish version of *Coppélia*.

KEITH BECKETT was born at Bletchley, Bucks. His first school of dancing was that of Vera Todd in Wembley. Later he went to the Cone-Ripman School and between various acting performances in the theatre and films he was awarded a scholarship. In 1946 he was awarded the Adeline Genée Silver Medal. After two and a half years' military service, he returned to the Cone-Ripman School. Following appearances in two musicals, he joined Festival Ballet at its outset. Over a year ago he left Festival to dance in cabaret and musicals, appearing also in *Cranks* for a short period. Now he is back with Festival Ballet as one of its principal dancers.

Ballet Dates

THE ROYAL BALLET at Covent Garden

June
18 *The Prince of the Pagodas* (Linden, Hynd)
19 *The Prince of the Pagodas* (Beriosova, Chatfield)
22 (M) *Petrushka*, *Giselle* (Nerina)
22 (E) *Petrushka*, *Giselle* (Markova, Blair)

End of Season. The next season at Covent Garden is from August 20 to 31, after which the company leaves for a five-month tour of America.

THE ROYAL BALLET at Sadler's Wells Theatre

July
1 *House of Birds*, *La Fete Etrange*, *Solitaire*
3 *House of Birds*, *La Fete Etrange*, *Solitaire*
4 *Les Patineurs*, *Apparitions*, *Pineapple Poll*
5 *Les Sylphides*, *The Rake's Progress*, *Pineapple Poll*
6 (M) *Coppélia*
6 (E) *The Rake's Progress*, *Apparitions*, *Facade*
8 *Solitaire*, *Giselle*
9 *Les Patineurs*, *La Fete Etrange*, *Apparitions*
10 (M) *Coppélia*
10 (E) *Swan Lake* Act II, *La Fete Etrange*, *Apparitions*
11 *Les Sylphides*, *Blood Wedding*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Facade*
12 *Solitaire*, *Giselle*
13 (M) *Coppélia*
13 (E) *Swan Lake* Act II, *Blood Wedding*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Facade*
15 *Les Patineurs*, *The Rake's Progress*, *Solitaire*
16 *Coppélia*
17 *Swan Lake* Act II, *House of Birds*, *Les Patineurs*
18 *Les Sylphides*, *The Rake's Progress*, *Soltaire*
19 *Swan Lake* Act II, *La Fete Etrange*, *Pineapple Poll*
20 (M) *Les Sylphides*, *House of Birds*, *Pineapple Poll*
20 (E) *Solitaire*, *Blood Wedding*, *Pineapple Poll*

FESTIVAL BALLET at the Royal Festival Hall

July
9–11 *Swan Lake* Act II, *Graduation Ball*, *Etudes*
12–15 *The Nutcracker*, *Graduation Ball*
16, 17 *Coppélia*
18–20 *Les Sylphides*, *Symphony for Fun*, *Etudes*
22–24 *Concerti* (première), *The Nutcracker*
25–29 *Swan Lake* Act II, *The Nutcracker*
31 *Coppélia*

Aug.
1–3 *The Nutcracker*, *Etudes*
5–7 *Swan Lake* Act II, *Symphony for Fun*, *Graduation Ball*
8–10 *Coppélia*

For remainder of season until September 7, see daily Press.
Evenings at 8 p.m. Matinées, Wed. and Sat. at 2.30 p.m.

BALLET RAMBERT

July
22 The Taw and Torridge Festival Barnstaple
30 The Sadler's Wells Theatre, London (2 weeks)

WESTERN THEATRE BALLET

June
24 Dartington Hall, Devon

July
1–3 Globe Theatre, Plymouth
4, 5 Queen's Hall, Barnstaple
6 Secondary Modern School, Wivelscombe
8, 9 The Pavilion, Exmouth
10 Priory School Hall, Exmouth.
11, 12 Manor Pavilion Theatre, Sidmouth
13 Arts Centre, Bridgwater
15 Theatre Royal, Bristol

EXHIBITION OF DESIGNS

at the Finsbury Town Hall, Rosebery Avenue, E.C.1.
June 27–July 13. *Two Stages.* An exhibition of theatre and ballet designs for the Old Vic and Sadler's Wells Theatres.

EUROPEAN FESTIVALS

Granada, Spain

June 24–July 4 The Paris Opéra Ballet and other companies.

Llangollen, Wales

July 9–14 Folk dance groups from Europe and America.

Genoa (Festival of Nervi)

July
20, 21 Homage to 19th-century Italian Dance, and *Pas de Quatre* with Markova, Chauviré, Schanne, Fracci
24, 25 Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas
27, 28 Luisillo's Spanish Dance Theatre
30–Aug. 2 Paris Opéra Ballet

Santander, Spain

Aug.
2–6 Ballet of the Netherlands Opera
11–16 The Royal Swedish Ballet from Stockholm
30–Sept. 2 Antonio's Spanish Ballet

Dubrovnik, Jugoslavia

July
1–15 Belgrade State Opera Ballet

Aix-Les-Bains

July
20, 21 Luisillo's Spanish Dance Theatre
23 Idla Flickorna's Swedish Ensemble
25 Gala ballet with Babilée and Vyroubova
27, 28 Polish Ballet "Mazowsze"
29 Symphony Concert of ballet music
30 Ballet of the Opéra Comique, Paris

Aug.
1 Gala of Choreography
3 Evening of works by young choreographers

Edinburgh, Scotland

Aug.
19–24 The Royal Swedish Ballet
26–Sept 1 Ballets Africains de Keita Fodéba
2–7 Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas

NEXT MONTH

LOOK FOR

LIANE DAYDÉ

on the front cover of the August issue of DANCE AND DANCERS.

INSIDE: Recent creations by American BALLET THEATRE'S Ballet Workshop; opinion by ARTHUR TODD and a portfolio of pictures. THE ROYAL DANISH BALLET FESTIVAL by E. C. MASON with pictures of recent creations. EUROPEAN BALLET FESTIVALS pictures and news of the various festivals where there is ballet. GRADUATION BALL —pictures of Festival Ballet's new production. Many articles of topical interest and all the regular features.

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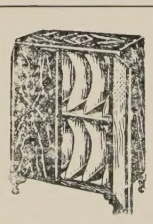

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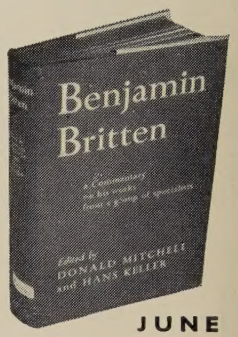
SEVEN ARTS BOOK CLUB *Bulletin*

A Monthly News Bulletin for Members — *Incorporating* Seven Arts Magazine

WHAT the critics said about a book is perhaps the reader's best guide to its value and authority, and so this first bulletin is devoted to extracts from press reviews of some of the Club's first Selections and Optional Extras, which are offered in the advertisement in the centre page this month. The books chosen by the Club Selection Committee all had enthusiastic reviews from the critics.

Pictured here are the first six Optional Extras



JUNE

PEGGY ASHCROFT

Mr. Keown follows Miss Ashcroft's career from her schoolgirl acting to the present day. It is a glowing record of achievement of our second great lady of the theatre—amply illustrated by a fine series of photographs.—*Daily Telegraph.*

Eric Keown, the urbane critic of *Punch*, sketches her whole astonishing career both pithily and accurately—his commentary winds through the well-chosen photographs.—Alan Dent in the *News Chronicle.*

A TREE IS A TREE

There are plenty of amusing stories. The difficulties of directing Miss Marion Davies in comedy, with Hearst objecting to custard pie throwing as undignified. The eccentricities of the late John Gilbert, using dialogue from *The Green Hat* to make impromptu love to Miss Beatrice Lillie, and sleeping with a gigantic automatic pistol.The *Observer.*

He (King Vidor) records some of the antics of the inhabitants (of Hollywood) and records the incredibly stupid methods of work which one of the biggest executives in the business employs and induces others to follow. He is at his best when concentrating on the technical aspects of his work, and his comments on the differences between his own methods of directing and those of D. W. Griffith are fascinating. Lilian Gish emerges as a real person and Mr. Vidor has one or two illuminating stories to tell of Mr. Chaplin.—*The Times Literary Supplement.*

It is full of good stories.—Dilys Powell in the *Sunday Times.*

GROUCHO

Intensely interesting. . . . There is not one item of this full, rich existence that we would willingly miss. . . . An account of a fantastic dinner-party given by the Groucho Marxes, a wild delight to read about. . . . Many superb examples could be quoted of his lightning-quick repartee.—G. B. Stern in the *Sketch.*

Full of good jokes in the Marx tradition. . . . Arthur Marx has made a good job of the almost impossible in transferring Marxian humour from stage and screen into a book.—*Manchester Evening News.*

I found this biography refreshing and delightful. . . . Groucho has got a good measure of laughter in it. . . . But what gave me greatest pleasure was the spirit of deep, but by no means uncritical, filial love with which the book is written.—Arthur Calder Marshall on the B.B.C.

BALLET DESIGN

A magnificent condensation of the history of the subject and the captions give the impression of being shown round a gallery by an expert.—*The Listener.*

Magnificent collection of pictures of ballet costumes and settings.—*The Scotsman.*

BALLET IN MOSCOW TODAY

She (Kirsova) brings to her writing the authority of a lifetime spent as a dancer and choreographer in Russian companies inspired by the ideas of Diaghilev and Fokine. We have for the first time in English a critical discussion and proper record of the Bolshoi Company.—*The Times Educational Supplement.*

Finely produced and lavishly illustrated . . . accompanied by many action photographs and portraits, and an analysis of stories and technique.—*The Stage.*

The author has written brief critical appreciations of twenty-five dancers, from Ulanova and Lepechinskaya downwards, indicating the roles which they commonly take and those in which they excel.—*The Times Literary Supplement.*

CENTURY OF BRITISH PAINTING

A Century of British Painting is a book which badly needed writing and there are not many who could have written it so well as Mr. Bertram.—*Art News and Reviews.*

A serious study of the trends of the last century with an excellent section of illustrations about a third of which are in colour.—*John O'London's Weekly.*

It is a book of surprises, richly illustrated, and we enjoyed every page. We agree with the claim made by the publisher that it is a book alike for the specialist and for the general reader.—*National Society for Art Education.*

JULY

THE WOUND AND THE BOW

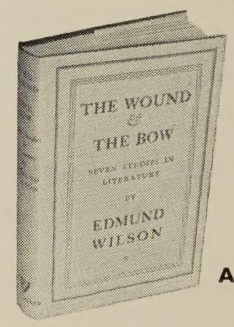
Edmund Wilson is probably the greatest living American critic . . . his wisdom is as wide as his style is readable, so that one can reach his essay on Dickens or his study of Kipling who, up to the age of six, talked, thought and dreamed in Hindustani, or his piece on Hemingway, who makes beauty out of the beast in man, with pleasure and profit.—*Hull Daily Mail.*

BENJAMIN BRITTEN

A most important book on the most important of the younger musical figures of our day. . . . 24 detailed and exhaustive chapters of penetrating analysis and apt comment . . . a work of vast enterprise.—Ernest Bradbury in the *Yorkshire Post.*

It will heighten the interest of those already enthralled and awaken it in others to whom his work is still unfamiliar.—Eric Blom in the *Observer.*

Valuable studies of Mr. Britten's work in all its genius by a number of writers of high competence.—Ernest Newman in the *Sunday Times.*



AUGUST

PORTRAIT OF VINCENT

Mr. and Mrs. Hanson have repeated the striking and richly deserved success which they won for their life of Pau Gauguin. They have invented a new type of artistic biography in which fact and criticism are adroitly mingled to produce a most readable narrative. For the general reader who wishes to acquire a knowledge of Van Gogh's career there could be no better book than the *Portrait of Vincent*; and if the serious scholar of art-history were to be restricted to a single book about him, this would meet authoritatively most of his special needs.—*Birmingham Post.*

This is the best biography yet to appear on Van Gogh; telling the story of his whole life with its miseries, pains, exaltations and labours. For the present this is the definitive story of Van Gogh.—*Queen.*

D. H. LAWRENCE: NOVELIST

This story of D. H. Lawrence is important, deserving to be widely read and very carefully considered.—J. B. Priestley.

One of the most brilliant chapters in recent literary criticism.—*Daily Telegraph.*

A book of historical importance and constructive critical force . . . his new analysis . . . puts him far above the majority of our critics.—*Sunday Times.*

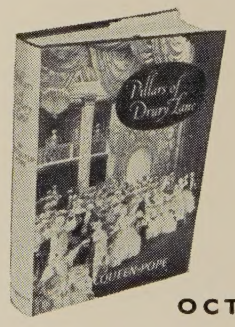
This is much the best book on Lawrence's work which has appeared . . . any serious critic of Lawrence will in future have to take this as his starting point. —*Scotsman.*

SEPTEMBER

PILLARS OF DRURY LANE

In *Pillars of Drury Lane* Mr. W. Macqueen Pope demonstrated that his romantic zest for the subject is quite unexhausted. Of the lesser-known men and women who have made the Lane's 283 years of history he finds plenty to say that will come fresh to the general reader; from old prompt books he digs out interesting information about theatre customs; and he recalls partly from the records and partly from his own enviably retentive memory, incidents from the days of spectacular dramas and pantomimes to those of the big musicals of Ivor Novello and Rodgers and Hammerstein. His chapter on Ensa's war-time occupation of the theatre is a valuable piece of first-hand reporting.—*The Times.*

His zest, his love of the personalities of the theatrical profession (as opposed to "show business") and his magnificent memory always make him worth reading. —*The Times Literary Supplement.*

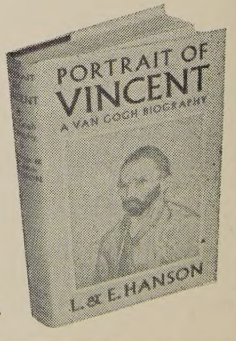


OCTOBER

GREAT OPERA HOUSES

The actual information it contains about the lengths of the seasons at different opera houses, the confusion of function between L'Opera and L'Opera-comique in Paris, the genealogy of Augustus Harris and a thousand and one other such oddities which are hard to authenticate, is valuable. The book's mixture of enthusiasm, strange learning and entertainment will commend it to all who care for opera.—*The Times Literary Supplement.*

The many anecdotes, historical and personal, give an added flavour to what in any case is a highly amusing and informative book.—*Opera.*



NOVEMBER